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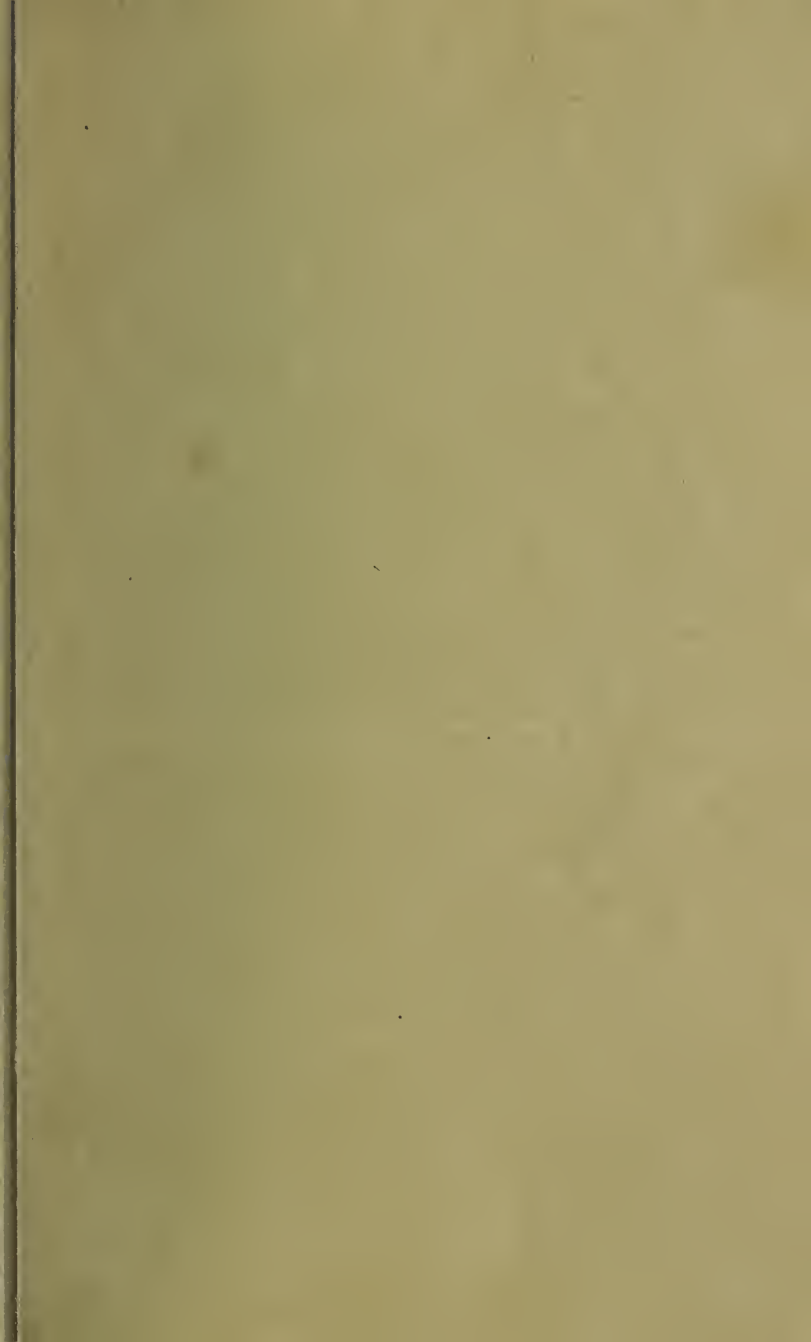


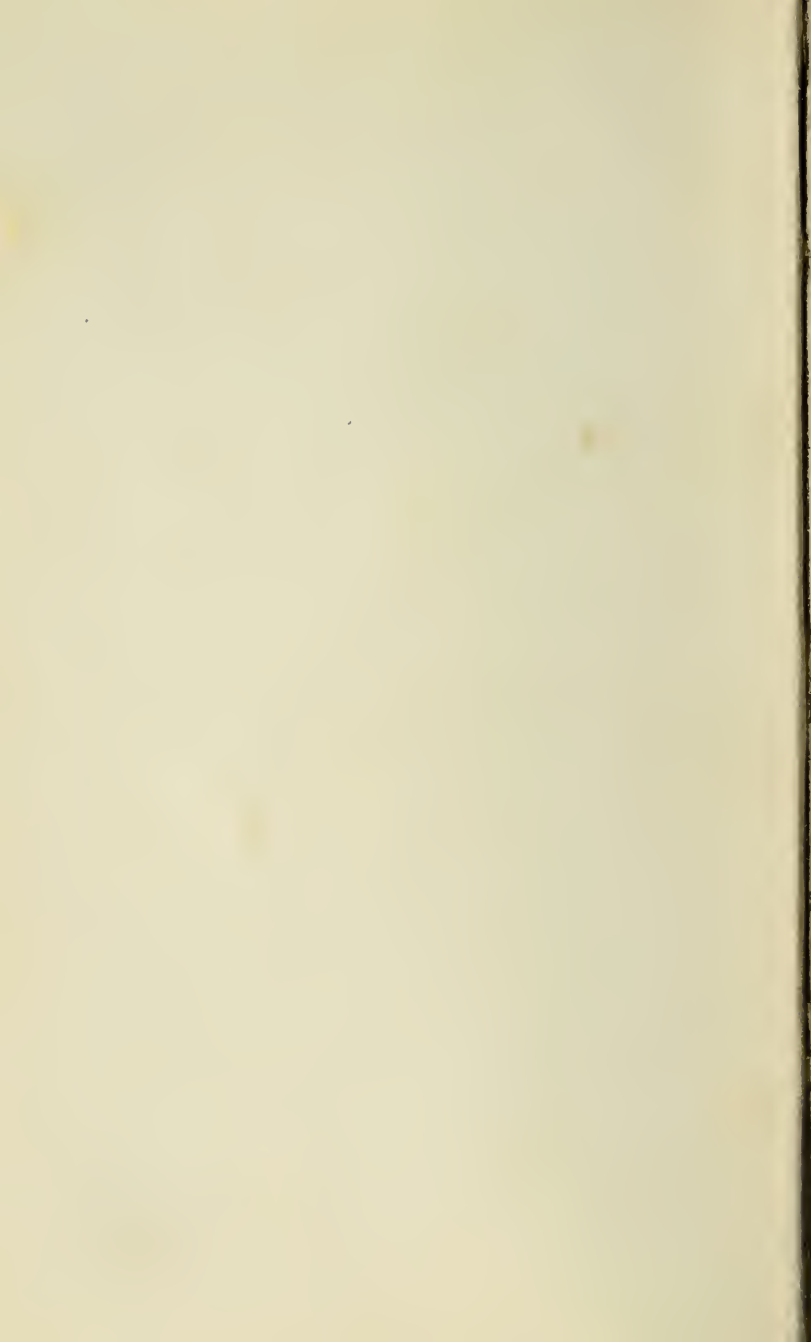
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HISTORY  
OF THE  
PRINCIPAL STATES OF EUROPE  
FROM THE  
PEACE OF UTRECHT.

LONDON

PRINTED BY S. AND R. BENTLEY, DORSET STREET.

John Russell Russell,  
HISTORY

OF THE

PRINCIPAL STATES OF EUROPE

FROM THE

PEACE OF UTRECHT.

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Non tamen adeo virtutum sterile sæculum ut non et bona  
exempla prodiderit.

TACITUS.

---

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

LONDON:  
JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET.  
1826.





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HISTORY  
OF THE  
PRINCIPAL STATES OF EUROPE,  
FROM THE  
PEACE OF UTRECHT.

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BOOK THE SECOND.

CONTINUED.



## CHAPTER I.

CONTINUED.

*Rebellion of 1715. Punishment of the Rebels.  
Septennial Act.*

THE prosecutions carrying on against the late 1715. ministers had served as a signal for riots in various Riots. parts of the country. In Staffordshire especially, a county long noted for its Tory politics, the mob assembled in great force, and destroyed some of the meeting-houses of the dissenters. In order to prevent the recurrence of similar excesses, an act was carried through Parliament, providing, that if Riot Act. persons, more than twelve in number, riotously, tumultuously, and unlawfully assembled, should remain together one hour, after proclamation made for them to disperse, they should be guilty of felony, without benefit of clergy. A short form of proclamation, to be read on such occasions, was laid down in the act.

1715. The Riot Act (for so this law was named) is to be blamed solely for the severity of the penalty attached to an offence which, according to circumstances, might be a very grave or a very slight one. In principle, there is no sound objection to be made to this statute. It did not prevent meetings of the people, or in any way restrain regular and peaceable assemblies, convened for the purpose of discussion and petition; it interfered with them only when they were riotous and tumultuous, and was therefore bottomed on the same ground as the policy adopted towards the press; namely, that of not interposing the arm of the state till a crime was actually committed. For it is clear, that a crowd which remains riotously assembled more than one hour, after proclamation made for them to disperse, must intend open rebellion, or at the least a defiance to the authority of the law. It is true that it is not easy to say where a lawful meeting ends, and an unlawful assembly begins; the decision of this point, however, must, in every case, whether this law had passed or not, have been left to the discretion of the magistrate, and could not be placed in any other hands. The Riot Act then was not, in principle, any encroachment on the liberty of the subject, and was in fact, more calculated to inspire a useful terror in disorderly mobs, than to produce either a tame servitude in the people, or a cruel vigour in the government.



It was likewise in perfect conformity to the spirit 1715.  
of the ancient laws on this subject. In order to  
make it perfect, however, it would be requisite,  
1st. That the penalty should be less severe; 2d.  
That a provision should be inserted for making the  
proclamation in a loud voice, and, if possible, in  
several parts of the crowd, so that it might be well  
heard and understood; 3d. That in order to pro-  
tect the people, it should be enacted that unless  
when some breach of the peace is committed, the  
crowd should not be dispersed by force within the  
time mentioned by the proclamation, nor any per-  
son arrested within that time for the sole offence of  
being present at such meeting.

In practice the Riot Act has seldom or never  
produced any serious oppression, or violation of  
the rights of the subject. Indeed, the penalty has  
scarcely ever been enforced. In many cases, the  
mob has proceeded to acts of violence and outrage,  
which have called for more active interference, and  
in others the magistrates have dispersed the meet-  
ing, and arrested the ringleaders by military  
force, long before the time assigned by the law  
has elapsed. Where oppression or cruelty has  
taken place, it has been rather from the neglect,  
than the too strict use of the Riot Act.

While legislative enactment was crushing the  
open expression of discontent, the ill humour of  
the people was too general to be suppressed by

Discontent  
of the  
people.

1715. any law. The King had brought with him from Hanover two mistresses; one of them named Mademoiselle Schulemburgh, afterwards made Duchess of Kendal, the other the Countess Platen. The general opinion was, that these women and other foreigners imported at the same time, were intent only upon robbing the treasury and palace of money and jewels. The crowd did not hesitate to express their suspicion and dislike on every opportunity. One day a German lady of the court, assaulted by these maledictions, as she was passing in the street, put her head out of the carriage window and cried out, "Why do you abuse us, good people? We come for all your goods." One of the crowd answered in a voice equally loud, "Yes, d—n you, and for all our chattels too."

Disaffec-  
tion.

Papers written in behalf of the Pretender, were at this time circulated with great industry. One of these, written by Mr. Leslie, during the late reign, and printed this year, describes the Chevalier as tall, and active in his person; resembling Charles the Second in countenance; candid, tolerant, and benevolent in his inclinations; just, firm, and considerate, in his principles.

The disaffection of England to the new government was not long confined to the mobs of London and Staffordshire. The chief leaders of the Tory party seeing all hope of their ascendancy destroyed,

began to cabal, as many of them had done before 1715. the accession, in aid of the cause of the Pretender. But their anger against the House of Hanover was much stronger than their zeal for the House of Stuart, and they were much more inclined to drink the Pretender's health and preserve their estates, than fight for him and lose them. Scotland was in a very different state; there the recent memory of the Union; the insignificance to which that proud nation had been reduced; national animosity against the English, now confessedly their masters; and a strong attachment to the ancient clannish principle of hereditary right, combined to produce a lively feeling in favour of the exiled family. Accordingly during the last years of the Queen, the Pretender had seriously projected a descent in Scotland; and the gentlemen of the low country in the vicinity of the highlands, had carefully provided themselves with arms and a small quantity of ammunition, that they might be ready at the shortest warning to rise in support of the descendant of their ancient kings. Yet even in Scotland, opinion was much divided, and the majority was perhaps in favour of the new dynasty. The Highlanders were attached to their chiefs, far more than to any political cause whatsoever; and among the different clans, none was more numerous than that of the Campbells, led by Argyll, the natural enemy of the House of Stuart. Other

1715. chiefs, seduced by interest, or awed by force, likewise sided with the government. The lowlanders, with the exception of the gentry, seem to have taken part with the new establishment. The towns in particular were zealous for the House of Hanover, and the large body of the people had not forgotten the oppression they had suffered under the father and uncle of the present Pretender. Thus in England, especially among the country squires, and their tenantry, the Stuarts had the general feeling in their favour, but it was not zealous; in Scotland they were supported by a very zealous attachment, but it was not general.

Designs of  
the Jacobites.  
July.

Such was the state of the affairs of the two kingdoms when about the beginning of July, a person sent by the chief Tories in England came to Lord Bolingbroke, then residing in Dauphiné. He represented that the people of England were so exasperated against the government, that far from wanting to be encouraged, they could not be restrained from insulting it on every occasion; that the whole Tory party had become avowedly Jacobite; that the army was disaffected; the city ready to rise; projects for seizing several places, ripe for execution; and the Duke of Ormond, assisted by the principal Tories at the head of the enterprize. The messenger added, that the friends of Bolingbroke had already engaged for him, and brought a letter from the Pretender himself, in-

viting his presence at Commercy. Bolingbroke, 1715. on his first coming to France, had promised Lord Stair that he would enter into no Jacobite engagement; but at the same time he had privately seen the Duke of Berwick, and promised his open assistance when a proper opportunity should arise. He was thus able to support or deceive whichever party he pleased, and nothing but his rash and restless temper would have induced him to leave this favourable position.

With no other information, however, than this loose and exaggerated statement, he now enlisted himself in the service of the Pretender. Not that he failed to perceive how much was wanting to form a reasonable inducement, "but the smart of an attainder," as he himself says, "tingled in every vein, and I looked on my party to be under oppression, and to call for my assistance." When he arrived at Commercy, he found the Pretender in as complete ignorance as himself, with respect to the preparations which had been made for the success of his cause. All that appeared certain, was that the Duke of Ormond had asked for a small body of regular troops, a sum of money, and a quantity of arms and ammunition from the court of France, and that he had been told in answer, he must not expect any troops; but at the same time had been made to hope generally for some arms, and had received a small sum of

Lord Bolingbroke sides with the Pretender.

1715. money. The Scots, on the other hand, were quite ready to rise, and sent frequent messages to the Pretender to invite him to come among them, some of which were delivered in terms more zealous than respectful. In this situation of affairs, Bolingbroke advised that the Jacobites in the north should be restrained from rising, till those in the south were ready, and that in the mean time the utmost endeavours should be used to induce the King of France to espouse the cause. Prompted by the usual vehemence of his character, Bolingbroke himself accepted the seals, and with a view of urging the French court to active measures, repaired immediately to Paris.

Here a new scene presented itself. A multitude of persons were zealously employed, but without subordination, order, or concert; they had worked up one another to believe success infallible, mistaking encouragements to act, for action itself. "Care and hope," says Lord Bolingbroke, "sate on every busy Irish face. Those who could write and read had letters to show, and those who had not arrived at this pitch of erudition, had their secrets to whisper." A Mrs. Trant, a lady whose character was far from unblemished, was one of the chief persons in this spontaneous ministry. All the messages that were sent, all the information that was received, all the designs that were afloat,



were carried from one little knot of people to another, and soon had a place in the despatches of Lord Stair to the government of England. 1715.

In the midst of this bustle without preparation, and threats without performance, a person arrived from England with a paper which had been dictated by the Earl of Mar, and had passed through the hands of the Duke of Ormond, containing the unanimous sense of the principal persons engaged in the design. In this memorial it was stated, that there were no hopes of succeeding in an undertaking at that time, without an immediate and universal rising of the people in all parts of England upon the Chevalier's arrival; that such a rising could not be hoped for, unless he brought a body of regular troops with him; and that for this purpose twenty thousand men, five hundred officers, with their servants, and a train of artillery were required. The Chevalier was desired not to land before the end of September; the places of landing were to be pointed out in a future communication.

Upon a sight of this memorial, the French government refused to afford a body of troops, or to give any open and avowed succour to the Pretender, in contravention of the treaty of Utrecht. But they furnished money and allowed Depine d'Anicaut to fit out a ship for the Chevalier him-

1715. self at the expense of the King of France. \* Nay it is not improbable that, with good management, France might have been drawn in to give the most active succours for an invasion of England; when suddenly an event occurred which ought to have put a stop to the insurrection of the Jacobites, and about the same time this insurrection was rashly and improvidently begun. The event of which I speak was the death of Lewis the Fourteenth, which happened just at that point of time in the affairs of England, at which we are now arrived.

The death  
of Lewis  
the XIVth.  
defeats his  
schemes.

Let us here pause for a moment to reflect on the occurrence of one of those happy hazards to which our liberty is so much indebted. It is the opinion of Lord Bolingbroke, that the disposition of Lewis the Fourteenth, and the violent jealousy of the Whigs, would soon have produced a renewal of the war between France and England. A French force landing with the Pretender at their head, would probably have received at this time the active support of the country gentlemen, a majority of whom had been the constant enemies of freedom from the accession of James the First; and would have been hailed by the acclamations of a mob, whose hatred of the Whigs and their principles, had been recently strengthened by their dislike to a foreign prince, ignorant of the manners

\* Letter to Wyndham.

and language of the country. On the other hand, 1715. the chief reliance of the House of Hanover, besides the Whigs and the trading interest, must have rested on the church and the army: but the clergy were alienated by seeing a party in power, which they thought favourable to the dissenters; and the army may always receive a new direction from two or three discontented and aspiring leaders. What might have been the issue of a bold and effective expedition to England at this time it is impossible to say, but it must be owned that her constitutional liberty never was in greater jeopardy.

At this critical moment, then, the death of Lewis the Fourteenth changed the whole complexion of the French court, and placed men in power, whose maxim it was to act in every respect contrary to the policy of the late King. The English government had likewise before this time taken the alarm. The King announced to Par- July 20th, 1715. liament the beginning of insurrection at home, with the expectation of invasion from abroad, and required the assistance of his faithful subjects. To comply with this call, the Habeas Corpus act was suspended; a measure which then, if ever, necessity justified; and nine new regiments were raised under officers faithful to the government.

About the same time, the arrival of the Duke

1715. of Ormond in France convinced the French court and people, of the weakness of the Jacobite party. It became as much the fashion of the courtiers to sneer at the cause of the Pretender, as it had lately been to cry it up. The English Jacobites themselves seem to have been confounded at the decease of their chief patron. In answer to a message from the Pretender, requiring a knowledge of their plans, they answered they could decide on nothing, till they knew the turn events would take upon the death of Lewis.

Arrival of  
the Duke  
of Ormond  
in France.

In this state of affairs, the Chevalier was beset afresh with earnest applications for his presence in Scotland; in reply to which, Lord Bolingbroke sent a message to Lord Mar that the sense of their friends was, that Scotland could do nothing without the assistance of England; that England would not stir without assistance from abroad; that he might assure himself no such assistance was to be expected; and he was desired to make his own inference from these propositions. But before this message arrived, the Earl of Mar had already left London to draw the Highlanders to arms, incited by a private message, unknown to his principal advisers, from the Chevalier himself; \* who loved to deceive and betray the few that remained faithful to his fortunes.

\* Mem. de Berwick.

The Earl of Mar, who now placed himself at the head of the rebellion in Scotland, was a man of quick talents, of interested disposition, restless in his temper, inordinate in his ambition. His father had been suspected at the time of the revolution, of a disposition to favour King James, but had made his peace by delivering an important post which he held, into the hands of the new government. The son had been a zealous promoter of the union between England and Scotland, and had thereby incurred the lasting animosity of numbers of the Scottish nation. In the latter part of the Queen's reign, he had intrigued with the Court of St. Germain; but on the accession of King George, he addressed to his new sovereign a letter full of adulation, magnifying his services at the Union, boasting that one of his ancestors had been intrusted with the care of the King's grandmother, and exalting his endeavours to keep things quiet and peaceable in Scotland. Finding, however, that his professions were disregarded, and that a place of five thousand a year, which he coveted, was not granted to him, he engaged actively in the intrigues then afoot in favour of the Pretender, and resolved to put himself at the head of a rebellion in Scotland. It has been conjectured by those who are not favourable to his character, that in this speculation, he did not ill consult his own

1715.

The Earl  
of Mar.

1715. personal advantage. In England, he was exposed every moment to be arrested, while in Scotland he might stir up an insurrection, which if it succeeded, would conduct him to the highest honours, and if it failed, would probably leave him the means to make his escape to France, and become a prime counsellor in the mock ministry of the Pretender.

Raises a rebellion in Scotland.

August,  
1715.

Be that as it may, however, the Earl of Mar about the 8th of August, embarked with Major-General Hamilton, Colonel Hay, and two servants, at Gravesend, on board a collier, and in a few days afterwards landed at Elie, in Fife. The adventurers immediately went to the house of John Bethune, of Balfour, a person known by the name of "the Honest Laird." Lord Mar proceeded from thence to the house of the Laird of Invercald, where he framed his intrigues, and organised his preparations. On passing through Fife, some of the gentlemen of that county, having complained to him that government was about to deprive them of their arms, he advised them to gather in a body and rise; so lightly did he venture in this affair, and so far was he from the prudence and caution which such an enterprise required. After staying about eight days at Invercald, Lord Mar proceeded to Aboyne, where he met Lord Huntley, Lord Tullibardine, eldest son of the Duke of

Athol; the Earl of Mareschal, the Earl of South- 1715.  
 esk, Glengary, Glanderule, who was charged with  
 a message from the Earl of Breadalbane, General  
 Gordon, and some others. These persons held a  
 consultation, and presently came to the resolution  
 to rise in arms without delay. They were induced  
 to take this bold step by a promise of Lord Hunt-  
 ley, that he would join them, provided only his  
 own time were granted him. In eight days more,  
 the Earl of Mar collected about five hundred of  
 his men, and on the 6th of September, set up Sept. 6th.  
 the standard of the Pretender at Brae-Mar. On  
 the 9th, he issued a declaration, calling upon the  
 people to take arms, and assuming the title of  
 Lieutenant-General of the Pretender's forces, on  
 the strength of a forged commission, which he had  
 produced at Aboyne.\*

In the mean time the government had taken  
 some decisive steps. By an act which received the  
 royal assent on the 30th of August, the King was  
 empowered to summon all the chiefs of the clans  
 to Edinburgh, a measure, the policy of which may  
 be justly questioned. Some of the chiefs indeed,  
 surprised into submission, proceeded to Edinburgh,  
 but others seeing no time left for deliberation or  
 compromise, beyond the few days allowed by the  
 government, hastened to swell the ranks of the

\* MS. in the possession of Lord Rosslyn.



1715. insurgents; others again, lingered till it was too late, and were obliged in despair to join the Earl of Mar.

Attempt to  
surprise the  
Castle of  
Edinburgh.

The first enterprise attempted by the insurgents, was the surprise of the Castle of Edinburgh. A serjeant and two soldiers belonging to the garrison having been gained, it was concerted that one of the soldiers, when posted as sentinel, should admit a party from the town. Half the town party, however, instead of arriving at nine in the evening, the time appointed, stayed drinking at a public house, and did not appear till near twelve. At this moment, the sentinel who had been gained, seeing the guard coming to relieve him, cried out to those below that they had ruined the whole, and fired his piece. The guard came up, and the party of the rebels made off with the loss of two or three of their number. About the same time the Lord Justice Clerk, having received notice of their intentions, gave the alarm, and the plot was thus completely defeated.

While these things were going on in Scotland, the English government, upon receiving news of the rising in the Highlands, despatched orders to Edinburgh for apprehending several suspected persons; pursuant to which, the Earls of Hume, Wigtoun, and Kinnoul, Lord Deskford, Mr. Lockhart of Carnwath, and Mr. Hume of Whitfield,



were committed prisoners to the Castle. Major 1715.  
General Whetham, Commander-in-Chief in Scotland, was ordered to march with all the regular troops that could be spared, to form a camp near Stirling, in order to secure the bridge over the Forth. The Duke of Argyll was appointed Commander-in-Chief of the forces in Scotland, and Lord Sutherland was sent to raise the Highland clans in the part of the country which bears his name. Many other of the Scotch peers offered their services to King George.

While the government was thus employed in quelling a rebellion in Scotland, they discovered a dangerous conspiracy in England. The titular Duke of Powis, a Roman Catholic, Lords Lansdown and Duplin were arrested, as implicated in this conspiracy, and a warrant was issued for the apprehension of the Earl of Jersey. At the same time a message from the King was sent to the House of Commons, informing them that his Majesty, having just cause to suspect that Sir William Wyndham, Sir John Packington, Mr. Edward Hervey, sen. Mr. Thomas Forster, jun. Mr. John Anstice, and Mr. Corbet Kynaston, were engaged in a design to support the intended invasion of the kingdom, had given orders for apprehending them. Mr. Hervey and Mr. Anstice were immediately secured; Sir John Packington was ex-

Conspiracy  
in England.

1715. mined and discharged; but Mr. Forster rose in rebellion in Northumberland; and Mr. Kynaston Corbet made his escape. The messenger sent to apprehend Sir William Wyndham at his house in Somersetshire, found him in bed; upon his coming out in his dressing-gown, he was immediately put under arrest, but getting permission from the officer to return and take leave of his lady, he escaped by a private door. Some important papers, however, were taken in his pockets, and a few days afterwards, Wyndham himself, finding it impossible to escape, went to the house of the Duke of Somerset, his father-in-law, and surrendered himself prisoner. The Duke of Somerset offered to be his bail, and upon his offer being refused, expressed himself so warmly, that for that reason, or upon that pretence, he was deprived of his office of Master of the Horse.

Sept. 21st. On the 21st of September, the King made a speech to both houses, in which he took notice that an attempt to persuade the people the Church of England was in danger, had been the main artifice employed to foment a rebellion, and expressed his indignation at so groundless and malicious a calumny. After this speech, the Parliament adjourned

Progress of  
the rebel-  
lion in  
Scotland.

Let us now return to the war in Scotland. It was with the utmost difficulty that Mar had been able to induce the chiefs of the clans to persist in

the proposed insurrection. When he had come 1715.  
down to Scotland he had represented England as  
already in rebellion, and France eager to pour her  
succours into the hands of the insurgents. The  
want of English intelligence had cast a shade upon  
these hopes, and the death of Lewis the Four-  
teenth had nearly induced the insurgents to aban-  
don the whole enterprise. But Mar, by seasonable  
falsehoods, contrived to keep up the spirits of his  
colleagues; he represented the Regent as a young  
and active prince, likely to aid them with far more  
vigour than a king sunk in the weakness of old  
age; and he spread daily reports of the immediate  
arrival of the Duke of Berwick in Scotland, to be  
followed by the Chevalier himself. In vain did  
the more sober point out both the opposite interests  
of the Duke of Orleans, and the impolicy of relying  
on a force to be mainly composed of Highlanders:  
in a multitude where all are equal, the time and  
the mode of acting are generally determined by  
the rash and incapable, who give to prudence the  
name of timidity, and cast suspicions on the zeal  
and sincerity of all who are not as wrong-headed  
and ignorant as themselves.

Soon after the proclamation of the Pretender at Sept. 1715.  
Brae-Mar, the insurgents were joined at Dunkeld  
by a considerable body under the Marquis of Tul-  
libardine, and in a short time their force amounted

State of  
the insur-  
gent army.

1715. to six or seven thousand men, including three squadrons of cavalry. But the composition of these forces was as crazy as their attempt was illtimed. The infantry consisted altogether of Highlanders, forming an irregular and untractable body, many of whom were not provided with flints to their guns by their commanders, in order to conceal a lamentable deficiency of powder. One of the leaders remarked that he feared the Highlanders would desert their colours in three cases. 1st. If they were long without being brought to action, they would tire and go home. 2d. If they fought and were victorious, they would plunder and go home. 3d. If they fought and were beaten, they would run away and go home.\* The cavalry of the army were, in the eye of an experienced soldier, not much more effective. They consisted entirely of gentlemen and their immediate dependents in the counties of Perth, Fife, and Angus. Accustomed to boast over their cups of the great deeds they would perform, they were brave in words, extravagant in their hopes, credulous of all favourable falsehoods, impatient of discipline, eager to meet their enemies in the field, but ignorant of all the other dangers and duties which belong to the profession of a soldier. When they marched,

\* MS. in the possession of Lord Rosslyn.

they took up their quarters where they liked, every 1715.  
 man providing himself with a bed where he best  
 could, and some straying several miles from their  
 squadron, to visit their families in the neighbour-  
 hood. When any command was to be given, all  
 were ready to speak, none to obey. Let us add  
 to this, that they were but imperfectly understood  
 by their highland companions in arms, and that  
 this little camp was distracted by as many jea-  
 lousies respecting commissions and precedencies, as  
 the court of Lewis the Fourteenth. What is far  
 more singular, is, that the insurgents were not  
 provided with officers from France, of known ex-  
 perience and fidelity ; indeed many of their troops  
 were led by bankrupts and swindlers, men anxious  
 to wipe off by military success, the stain of their  
 civil life, or to leave their country with honour,  
 when they could not stay in it but with misery.\*

Yet with this ineffective force something might  
 have been done, if the chiefs had possessed talent  
 and resolution. It is a maxim sanctioned by  
 Francis Sforza and Lewis the Eleventh, that when  
 a prince is attacked by a confederacy of his power-  
 ful subjects, the best policy he can pursue is to  
 avoid a battle, and let his enemies waste them-  
 selves in inaction by disputes and jealousies. If  
 this maxim be correct, it follows that the interest

Insurgents  
 divide their  
 forces.

\* MS. in the possession of Lord Rosslyn.

1715. of an insurgent army is diametrically the opposite. The Duke of Argyll had scarce fifteen hundred men under his command; the Highlanders were ready to fight any force to which they might be opposed; a victory would have afforded to the insurgents the means of future success, and an encouragement to distant friends. Some action of acknowledged brilliancy was necessary to them, both to cover the rashness of the original design, and to restrain the Lowland Covenanters, who, it was plain, would never join in an attempt to place the crown on the head of a Stuart. This view of their situation agrees with the opinion of the sensible and cool-headed Marshal Berwick.\* But the Earl of Mar was not a military genius, and General Hamilton had more the talents of a tactician, than those of a party chief. Hence these leaders adopted the timid and unwise plan of breaking their force into detachments, and splitting the eight or ten thousand men they could raise, into expeditions, while the main force remained stationary. With a loss both of strength and of time, the body under General Gordon was sent into the West Highlands; another was moved across the Firth of Forth to raise their Lowland friends, and annoy the rear of the royal army.

Yet, though ill-directed, and often ill-conducted,

\* Memoirs, t. 2.

the first operations of the insurgents showed vigour 1715. and courage. A small force under Colonel Hay was sent against Perth, and by the assistance of the Jacobite burghers, got possession of that important town. Intelligence being received that a skipper was in the harbour of Burntisland laden with arms, a detachment under Mr. Sinclair was despatched there, and succeeded in possessing itself both of the town and of the ship, which last contained, however, only three hundred muskets. The force ordered to pass the Firth consisted of two thousand five hundred men. The strait was guarded, it was supposed effectually, by English frigates, but in spite of all their vigilance eleven hundred men crossed over, and landed in the neighbourhood of Haddington; the rest were driven back or dispersed, with the exception of Lord Strathmore, who was forced into the Isle of May, where with three hundred men he defended himself most gallantly for several days against the English ships, and then rejoined his friends. Brigadier Mackintosh, who commanded this expedition, took possession of the citadel of Leith, and threw great alarm into Edinburgh. Argyll, at the earnest request of the magistrates of that town, came from Stirling with some horse and mounted infantry, but finding the fort too strong to carry by assault against a superior force, he remained quiet. The



1715. insurgents drew off to Seaton House, which they began to fortify. • Here Argyll prepared to besiege them, when he received intelligence that Mar was marching upon Stirling; on which he broke up and hastened back to meet the enemy; but Mar, whose movement was only a feint to save his friends, retired, and both armies resumed their positions. Mackintosh relieved by this manœuvre, left Seaton House, and marched toward Kelso, where he joined the English rebels. Of their joint operations I shall speak presently. In the mean time let us follow the operations of Lord Mar.

In their advance towards Stirling, the rebel force had, as usual, been very deficient in discipline. At Dumblain, their horse had taken two hours to dismount, and if an enemy had appeared, they would have been as long before they were in readiness to receive him.\* The royalists took advantage of this negligence in a march the insurgents made towards Dunfermline: Colonel Cathcart coming up with a party of horse, rode into the town where they were quartered, and seizing all who ran into the streets, made prisoners seventeen persons, nearly all of them gentlemen; he then rode quietly off towards Stirling, and was already at a distance before the rebels, who ima-

\* MS. in the possession of Lord Rosslyn.



gined the whole English army had attacked them, 1715. ventured to leave the houses in which they were lodged.

Huntley at length arrived with his long promised succour. It consisted of fifteen hundred infantry, and two squadrons of cavalry. The infantry was composed of stout and valiant Highlanders; but the cavalry, formed of large bulky men mounted on little horses, their Highland bonnets on their heads, and their rusty muskets hanging at their backs, without either boots or pistols, excited, under the title of light horse, the derision of the rebel army. Yet they were Highlanders of the same frame and the same courage with the infantry; nothing but circumstances and a name made the one body ridiculous while the other was respected.

With this additional force, though still deprived of the clans who had marched with General Gordon to the western Highlands, the Earl of Mar resolved to move forward against the enemy. The Duke of Argyll, upon intelligence of his march, determined to advance, and instead of meeting the rebels at the passes of the Forth, where his cavalry would be of no service, to pass the river and encounter them on the plain. Yet by so doing he exposed himself to the disadvantage of fighting with a river in his rear.

Advance  
of Mar.

1715. The two armies approached each other in the evening of the 11th of November. The insurgents hearing of the advance of Argyll, and afraid to continue their march, halted in a hollow, where they remained in a disadvantageous position the whole night. In the morning they ascended the hill above them, and immediately beheld on a rising ground at a mile's distance a large body of cavalry, which Argyll in person had led out to reconnoitre their position. Upon this the Earl of Mar ordered all the chiefs to assemble in the middle of his army, and made them an eloquent speech, in which he painted the wrongs of their Prince and their country, and congratulated them that the day was at length come to revenge their injuries in open battle. Huntley alone raised some objections to engaging; the rest drowned his voice in the shouts of "fight, fight!" and galloped off to their different posts. \*

Battle of  
Sheriff-  
Muir.

November  
12th.

The army of Argyll consisted of about three thousand five hundred men, including three regiments of cavalry; the rebel force was calculated by their enemies at nine thousand, but did not exceed eight. The right of the insurgents was commanded by Lord Drummond; General Hamilton seems to have acted as chief of the staff. Their army formed in line with a rapidity and decision

\* Ibid.

which would have done honour to veterans, but by 1715. some accident three squadrons of horse posted on the left, misled by a cry from the Highlanders of "horse to the right," forsook the position in which they had been placed, and took ground on the right. This accident had an unfortunate influence on their fortune.

The Duke of Argyll, upon seeing the disposition of the enemy, was afraid of being outflanked, and changed the order of his troops. While this manœuvre was performing, the Highlanders on the right of Mar's army rushed upon the English infantry who were not yet formed; their furious and compact charge seemed about to overwhelm all resistance, when in the onset the Captain of Clanronald was killed, and his clan for a moment seemed to hesitate. At this instant, Glengary throwing his bonnet into the air, cried "Revenge! Revenge! Revenge to-day and mourning to-morrow!" Roused at his voice and bidding, the Highlanders again ran forward to the muzzles of the muskets of the infantry, and pushing aside the bayonets of the English with their targets, attacked them with their broadswords and drove them from the field. The conquerors instantly with loud shouts pursued their advantage, and were followed by a body of the insurgent cavalry, who neglecting the centre to which they were op-

1715. posed, charged without orders to complete the victory of the Highlanders. After some pursuit they all returned to the main body. In the mean time Argyll had attacked the left of Mar's army with his cavalry; a marsh which was usually impassable had been frozen in the night, and enabled him to charge them at once in front and flank: the Highlanders not yet in perfect order, and deprived of their cavalry, turned and gave way. Argyll pursued them for two miles, and drove them to the borders of the river Allan, not however till they had frequently formed and made head against their pursuers. When Argyll arrived at the border of the river he found the enemy in such numbers, that he supposed their whole army to be there, and sent orders to the troops he had left behind to hasten their march in his support, that he might complete the victory. But General Weightman, to whom these orders were given, seeing a large body of the enemy's army still upon the hill, advanced slowly and cautiously to assist his general. Upon receiving this information, Argyll stopped the pursuit, and returned towards Dumblain. On his march he perceived the bulk of the insurgent army formed upon the hill, but no attempt was made to molest him, and he quietly drew off round the hill, and lay that night with his army at Dumblain. This inaction of the rebels

at a critical moment has been greatly blamed. A 1715. Highland officer, who was watching the march of Argyll round the hill, stung with the sight, could not help exclaiming, "Oh! for an hour of Viscount Dundee!" The Earl of Mar, who was far from resembling Dundee, drew off on his side to Ardoch. The next morning the royalists took possession of the field, where they found the greater part of the cannon of the insurgents.

The loss on the two sides was pretty equally balanced. The insurgents were said to have lost eight hundred men in killed, wounded, and prisoners, and the royalists six hundred. The subsequent loss of the rebels was much greater.

The battle of Dumblain, or Sheriff-Muir, resembles more one of those combats of the middle ages, in which the opposite armies rushed on each other with desperate but undirected courage, than the scientific actions of modern times. Argyll perhaps ought not to have given battle; the castles of Stirling and Edinburgh were in his possession; the people of the towns were all well affected; his force was unequal to that of the enemy, and large reinforcements were marching to his assistance. In the battle itself, his attaching himself to one wing and pursuing his advantage with them, made him lose sight of the rest of his army, although his whole force was small, and the field not extensive.

1715. Some one said, in derision, that he was a better Christian than general, for he did not let his left hand know what his right hand was doing. On the other hand, the Earl of Mar appears to have been utterly wanting in military talent, and to have been quite incapable of taking advantage of the success which the spontaneous gallantry of his Highlanders had procured for him.

The battle of Sheriff-Muir left undecided the fortune of the war. Argyll retired to Stirling, and Mar to Perth, both boasting, and without falsehood, of the advantages they had gained. But events which had occurred in other parts, and the internal state of the insurgent army, solved the question which the battle had left at issue. Let us first turn to the fate of the English insurgents, and the detachment of Mackintosh.

Events in  
England.

The early preparations of the government, and the arrest of the principal conspirators, had totally paralyzed the plots of the Jacobites in England. The Duke of Ormond, upon landing near Plymouth, was unable to procure a night's lodging in a country to which he came to command an army; and was obliged to consult his safety by an immediate return to France. On a second attempt, which seems to have been undertaken without any chance of success, he was, fortunately for himself, driven back to the French coast by a storm. In

the mean time some persons who met at Bath, to 1715.  
concert an enterprize upon Bristol, were arrested  
or dispersed by the vigilance of the Lord Lieu-  
tenant of the county. Oxford was supposed to be  
peculiarly disaffected; a letter from a student,  
which was intercepted, boasted that they “drank  
James’s health there every day.” Major General  
Pepper being ordered there to arrest some persons  
accused of treason, entered the town early in the  
morning, and securing the gates, sent to the Vice-  
Chancellor, to desire that the accused might be  
given up to him. The Vice-Chancellor, who a few  
days before had addressed a flowing compliment to  
the Earl of Arran, lately elected Chancellor, in the  
room of his brother the Duke of Ormond, upon  
the virtues of the house of Butler, now spoke in  
a tone of submission and protestation. General  
Pepper, in his answer, desired that he would keep  
all the fellows and students in their colleges: this  
was complied with, and several of the persons  
sought for were arrested, but one of the chief got  
into Magdalen college and escaped.

The west, the midland, and southern parts of  
England, were thus easily freed from insurrection; Insurrec-  
tion in the  
North.  
in the north the Jacobites made a more vigorous  
attempt. The Earl of Derwentwater, a young  
nobleman of distinguished bravery and popular  
character, romantically attached to the cause of



1715. legitimacy, joined Lord Widdrington and Mr. Forster, and raised the standard of the Pretender at Warkworth, Morpeth, and Alnwick. Their troops consisting entirely of cavalry, they applied to the Earl of Mar for a reinforcement of infantry. This request was complied with, by sending Mackintosh across the Firth: the English insurgents, after failing in an attempt on Newcastle, effected a junction with him at Kelso. On their march they were joined by the Earls of Carnwath and Wintoun, and Viscount Kenmure.

A council of war was now held to deliberate on their future movements. The Earl of Wintoun proposed to march towards the west of Scotland, to join General Gordon, and combine with Mar in pressing the Duke of Argyll with all their forces. With this proposal, however, the English gentry refused to comply, and urged in their turn, the propriety of attacking General Carpenter, who had been sent with only nine hundred cavalry to suppress the rebellion in Northumberland. But this scheme was as little palatable to the Scotch, as the former had been to the English. In the end, neither plan was adopted, and it was determined to march into Lancashire, where they hoped to be joined by a large body of Roman Catholics. In executing this plan, however, they lost half their Highlanders, who, disgusted at the prospect



of going into England, dispersed, and found their way home. 1715.

The rebels directed their march under the conduct of Forster, who had received a commission from Mar, by Penrith, Kendal, and Lancaster, to Preston. At Kendal, twelve thousand of the posse comitatus, who had been assembled by Lord Lonsdale, the chief of an old Whig family, were seized with terror at the approach of the enemy, and, as might have been expected from that obsolete force, fled in all directions. The rebels had scarcely arrived at Preston, having received on the way some accession of strength, when they were informed that General Wills, with six regiments of cavalry, and a battalion of infantry, was preparing to invest the town. In his march, General Wills was obliged to pass the bridge of Ribble, the only approach to which was by a long narrow lane, where it is said that Cromwell, in an engagement with the royalists, was nearly killed by a large fragment of rock thrown from above, and only escaped by forcing his horse into a quicksand. The rebels however on this occasion, from ignorance or apprehension, abandoned the pass, and reserved their strength for the defence of the town of Preston. For one day they made a very effectual resistance, and the English were obliged to retire from the attack with some loss. But on

Rebels  
march to  
Preston.

Nov. 12th.

1715. the following day it being rumoured that General Carpenter had arrived with reinforcements, the insurgents resolved to treat, and sent Lord Derwentwater and Colonel Mackintosh as hostages, during the negotiation. Mackintosh ventured to say that he did not know if his Scots could be brought to submission on the terms proposed, upon which General Wills told him, that unless they did so, every man of them should be put to the sword. This threat produced a speedy conclusion. Fifteen hundred men surrendered at discretion; among them were seventy-five English, and one hundred and forty-three Scots noblemen and gentlemen.\*

They sur-  
render at  
discretion.  
Nov. 14th.

Intrigues  
in France.

While the affairs of the Pretender in England wore so grave an aspect, the hope of succours from abroad, which had been the foundation of the whole enterprize, proved utterly fallacious. The object of the Duke of Orleans was to secure the crown of France, in case of the death of the young king; for this purpose, an alliance with King George was far preferable to a confederacy with an outlawed Prince. Impressed with this view of his situation, the Regent held fast by the treaty of Utrecht, and declined giving any efficient support to the cause of the Pretender. It is

\* Tindal. State Trials, vol. xv.

true, that partly owing to the irresolution of the 1715. Regent's character, and partly to the love of an intriguing, oblique, and faithless policy, which marked all French statesmen of this time, hopes were from time to time held forth, and succours drop by drop sparingly allowed to the Jacobites, either to satisfy the increasing importunity of their agents, or from the pleasure of seeing an ancient and successful rival torn by intestine war. At one time ships were allowed to be laden with ammunition at Havre, destined for the insurgent army; at another, arms were taken out of the magazines, professedly for the service of the Pretender, and said to be lodged at Compiègne; the Duke of Ormond first, and afterwards Lord Bolingbroke, were allowed to carry on an intercourse with the Regent, by means of Mrs Trant and Mademoiselle de Chausseraye, whose house was a rendezvous for political intrigue. But all these demonstrations led to nothing; on a remonstrance from Admiral Byng, the stores embarked at Havre were landed and placed in the government magazines; the arms said to be lodged at Compiègne never were forthcoming; and the Regent cut short the intercourse through Mrs. Trant, by expressing his dislike of such a mode of communication. When Sir John Areskine arrived from Scotland to press for succour, the Regent, it is

1715. true, consented to see him, but he obtained nothing more than a part of the money which had been sent from Spain to Lewis the Fourteenth for the purpose; this supply was afterwards lost with the vessel on the Scottish coast. Upon the whole, it became quite evident to Bolingbroke and Berwick, that no assistance of any consequence was to be expected from France.

Yet in this state of his affairs did the Chevalier resolve to put in execution the plan of repairing to Scotland, and taking the command of his army. To this singular determination he was impelled by his counsellors in exile, who could not bear to hear the taunts on his courage current at the French court; and who listened with some credulity to the loud professions there made of a readiness to acknowledge the Pretender, if he could once maintain himself in Scotland in the character of King.\*

Landing of  
the Pretender.

Upon the news of the insurrection of Mar, the Pretender had gone from Lorraine to St. Maloes. After being detained there for some time, he sailed from Dunkirk, and landed at Peterhead towards the end of December. He was accompanied by the Marquis of Tynemouth, son of the Duke of Berwick, and five other gentlemen.

December.

When the Chevalier arrived in this manner in

\* Letter to Wyndham.

Scotland, his affairs were in the worst possible 1715. situation. The army which had fought at Dumblain, although not defeated, lost five of the eight thousand men of which it consisted, on the day following the battle, by desertion; and those who remained, destitute of powder and provisions, made a disorderly retreat to Perth. When there, as is usual with inactive insurgents, the various chiefs broke forth in animosities and cabals. A tumultuous camp led by an old courtier could hardly flourish. Many proposed to make an accommodation with the enemy, none had any confidence in the genius of a commander, who utterly neglecting every military precaution, wasted his time in writing letters, and spreading false reports of succours to be received from France, or victories gained by their companions in England. To complete the misfortunes of the rebels, Sir John Mackenzie, after a gallant defence, was obliged to abandon Inverness, to Simon Frazer, Lord Lovat, who had joined the Earl of Sutherland,\* while Huntley and Seaforth retiring to their own pos-

\* It is a strong proof that the clannish principle was the only motive of the Highlanders in this rebellion, that the Frazers who had followed a younger branch of the Family to Mar's standard, no sooner found that the chief was on the other side, than they deserted in a body to the royal army.

1715. sessions, entered into negotiations with the government. Mar himself, discouraged by the state of affairs, and having little more than a thousand foot and four hundred horse under his command, attempted to obtain terms, through the Countess of Murray, from her nephew the Duke of Argyll. Argyll replied at first, that he had no powers to treat; but upon a second overture, he made answer that he had sent for instructions, and would inform the Earl of Mar as soon as he had received his powers.\*

1716. In this state of things, the Pretender arrived at Peterhead. He passed through Aberdeen in the disguise of a naval officer, to Fetterosse, where he was met by the Earls of Mar and Mareschal, and about thirty noblemen and gentlemen; from thence  
Jan. 7th, 1716. he went to Scone, where he proposed to stay till the ceremony of his coronation should be performed. He there formed a regular council, and published six proclamations; the vain symbols of his royalty. He likewise made a spirited speech to his followers, informing them, he was come to defend his rights, and calling upon them to stand by him. At the same time, however, it was privately determined to abandon the enterprize. The want of numbers, and the impossibility of subsist-

\* MS. in the possession of Lord Rosslyn.

ing in the Highlands, even with the number he had, were quite sufficient reasons for this determination. 1716.

The Duke of Argyll having now received the reinforcement of the Dutch auxiliaries, was posted with three or four times the force of the insurgents at Stirling. By taking possession of Burnt-Island, with a detachment of Dutch troops, he had cut off the communications of the rebels with Fife. Nevertheless, he was strongly reproached with delay and inactivity by General Cadogan, who now arrived from England. Indeed, it seems probable that Argyll, from what motive it is impossible to say, wished to spare the rebels, and give them fairer terms than they were entitled to expect. General Cadogan openly accused him of want of zeal, and forced him by his remonstrances, to march against the Pretender. At the end of January, notwithstanding a prodigious fall of snow, the royal troops advanced towards Perth, which was immediately abandoned by the rebels. \* The Pretender finding himself hotly pursued, embarked on board a small French ship that lay in the harbour at Montrose, accompanied by the Earls of Mar and Melford, and Lord Drummond. The ship stretched over to Norway, and coasting along

Dispersion  
of the Re-  
bels.

Jan. 29th.

\* Cadogan says, in a letter to the Duke of Marlborough—"The Duke of Argyll grows so intolerably uneasy,



1716. the German and Dutch shores, arrived in five days at Gravelines. The rest of the rebel force, which was left under the command of General Gordon, retired to Aberdeen, where the chief part of the officers embarked for France. The Highlanders fell back into the mountains of Badenoch, and before the English could come up with them,

that it is almost impossible to live with him any longer; he is enraged at the success of the expedition, though he and his creatures attribute to themselves the honour of it. When I brought him the news of the rebels having run from Perth, he seemed thunderstruck, and was so visibly concerned, that even the foreign officers that were in the room took notice of it." There is a passage in Bolingbroke's letter to Wyndham, which seems to countenance the suspicions here thrown out. "The Earl of Mar knows that all the powder in France could not have enabled him to stay at Perth so long as he did, if he had not had another security; and when that failed him he must have quitted the party, if the Regent had given us all he had made some of us expect," p. 237. Cadogan in a subsequent part of his letter says, "Since the rebels quitting Perth, he (Argyll) has sent for five or six hundred of his Argyllshire men, who go before the army a day's march, to take possession of the towns the enemy have abandoned, and to plunder and destroy the country, which enrages our soldiers, who are forbid under pain of death to take the value of a farthing, though out of the rebels' houses. Not one of these Argyll men appeared whilst the rebels were in Perth, and when they might have been of some use." Coxe's Marlborough, vol. iii. p. 612.



were entirely dispersed. The Duke of Argyll <sup>1716.</sup> was recalled by the English government, and soon after deprived of all his offices.

If we reflect a moment on this ill-fated expedition, it will be seen that though badly planned and miserably conducted, the want of success is chiefly to be attributed to the prudent quiet of the English Jacobites. Nor can this inactivity well be accounted for on any other supposition than this, that they were not hearty in their attachment to the exiled family. That they would gladly have seen a French army drive George the First from his throne, there can be little doubt; but there seems to have been a total absence of that spirit which, in the preceding century, had rallied the brave cavaliers round the standard of Charles the First. Whether this indifference is most to be attributed to the Roman Catholic faith of the Pretender, or to the security of person and property enjoyed under the government of the Revolution, I will not decide. But these two seem to be the principal causes of the distinction to be observed between the two periods. In the former instance, the nobility and gentry of England resisted a government which overturned the church, and seemed likely to shake all the ancient institutions in the kingdom. In the latter case, they were called upon to rise against an establishment

1716. which protected their persons and their properties, in favour of a prince whose religion they disliked, and with whose character they were unacquainted. In the former instance, doubt and fear induced them to rush to arms; in the latter to remain quiet.

In the course of this attempt, the Pretender proved himself to be utterly destitute of the great qualities, for which his partizans had given him credit. Without any enlarged views either of politics or morality, he was swayed in all his actions by the maxims of priests, at once ignorant of the world, and accomplished in duplicity. By their advice he declined to sign a declaration, promising a full security to the church of England, because it was against his conscience; yet he consented to sign the same declaration when certain words had been altered, so that he might afterwards appeal to the letter, against the spirit of his promise.\* So meanly equivocating was the character of this unfortunate Prince!

Impeach-  
ment of the  
Rebel  
Lords.  
Jan. 1716.

The next thing to be related, is the punishment of such of the rebels as had been taken in arms. For this purpose, in the beginning of January, Mr. Lechmere, after a speech of some length, moved to impeach Lords Derwentwater, Widdrington, Nithisdale, Wintoun, Carnwath,

\* Letter to Wyndham.

Kemmure, and Nairn, of high treason. The same 1716.  
night the articles of impeachment were carried up to the Lords, and on the next day the accused were brought to the bar of the House. They all pleaded guilty, except the Earl of Wintoun, who had further time allowed him. On the 9th of February, the impeached Lords were again brought to the bar, when, after the articles of impeachment and their answers had been read, Lord Cowper, who acted as Lord High Steward, pronounced the sentence of the law, according to its ancient and barbarous form.

Great interest was made by their relations on behalf of the condemned lords, and the House of Peers even carried up an address to the King, praying that he would reprieve such of them as should deserve his mercy. The King replied, that he would do what he thought most consistent with the dignity of his crown, and the safety of his people. This resolute answer put an end to the hopes of the Jacobites. Lord Nottingham, who had supported the petitions in favour of the condemned lords in the House of Peers, was a few days afterwards, together with Lord Aylesford, his brother, and Lord Finch, his son, removed from all his offices. Notwithstanding however this tone of severity, Lord Widdrington, Lord Carnwath, and Lord Nairn, were reprieved; the

1716. other three were ordered for execution; but Lord Nithisdale found means to escape from the Tower in disguise, the very night before the execution. The King, upon being told the next morning of his escape, said, "It was the best thing a man in his condition could have done."\*

Execution  
of the Lords  
Derwent-  
water and  
Kenmure.  
Feb. 24th.

The Earl of Derwentwater and Viscount Kenmure were beheaded on Tower-Hill on the 24th of February. Lord Derwentwater, before he died, asked permission to read a paper, which was readily granted to him. In this paper, he declared that he repented of having pleaded guilty at his trial; "that he never owned any other but King James the Third, for his rightful and lawful sovereign, whom he had had an inclination to serve from his infancy, and that he hoped his death might contribute to the service of his King and country, and the re-establishment of the ancient fundamental constitution of these kingdoms."\* After reading this paper, he looked at the block, and finding a rough place in it, desired the executioner to chip it off. Upon a signal given, his head was taken off at one blow. Lord Kenmure was executed immediately after: he made no speech, and delivered no paper, but shortly after his death a letter was published, in which he main-

\* State Trials, vol. xv.

tained the title of “the person called the Pretender, 1716. whom he believed to be the true son of James the Second.”

Lord Wintoun, after a trial of some length, was likewise condemned to death, but afterwards made his escape from the Tower.

In the beginning of April, a commission for trying the rebels met in the Court of Common Pleas, when bills of high treason were found against Mr. Forster, Mackintosh, and twenty of their confederates. Forster escaped from Newgate, and reached the Continent in safety; some time afterwards, Mackintosh, and several other prisoners, likewise broke from prison, after having mastered the keeper and turnkey, and disarmed the sentinel; some were retaken, but Mackintosh and seven others escaped. The court proceeded with the trials of those who remained; a great number were found guilty, and four or five were hanged, drawn, and quartered at Tyburn. In Lancashire, two and twenty prisoners were executed; above a thousand submitted to the King's mercy, and prayed for transportation.

Other executions.

In 1717, an act of grace was passed by the King and two Houses of Parliament, by virtue of which, the Earl of Carnwath, Lords Widdrington and Nairn, were delivered from the Tower: seventeen persons confined in Newgate; the prisoners in the

1716. castles of Lancaster and Carlisle, and those in the castles of Edinburgh and Stirling, including the Earl of Strathallan, and Lord Rollo, were likewise set free.

Such was the treatment of the persons found in arms in this rebellion. If we consider the object of the rebels, the blood which they spilt in their enterprize, and the necessity of securing the kingdom by some examples of severity from further disturbance, we shall probably be of opinion, that as much mercy was shown, as was consistent with the safety of the established government, and the vindication of the rights of the people.

Septennial  
Bill.

Although the rebellion was extinguished, the spirit which had blown the flame was far from having subsided. The Tory party, enraged at the prosecution of their leaders, and longing for revenge on their opponents, omitted no means to secure a majority at the next general election. A prevailing feeling of pity for the condemned lords, and admiration of the courage with which they had met their fate, were sentiments most favourable to these hopes, and every one perceived that the victory which had been gained in the field of battle, was to be won again upon the hustings. In this situation the Whig ministry took a bold resolution, which saved the liberties of the country, while it exposed their names to obloquy and reproach.

This was no other than a determination to prolong 1716.  
the Parliament beyond the period fixed by the triennial act, which had by their means been established. It is said, that at first, they meditated a suspension of the act for one election only. But it was thought that a permanent measure would have less the air of violating constitutional laws for a temporary necessity; and they resolved to extend the duration of Parliament to seven years.

The Duke of Devonshire, whose father had been April 10th.  
one of the chief promoters of the Triennial Act, was the person who brought the septennial bill into the House of Lords. The preamble of the bill contained the two reasons upon which the bill was grounded. It stated in the first place, that the triennial act had proved "very grievous and burthensome, by occasioning much greater and more continued expenses, in order to elections of members to serve in Parliament, and more violent and lasting heats and animosities among the subjects of this realm, than were ever known before the said clause was enacted:" and secondly it affirmed, that if it should continue, it might probably "at this juncture, when a restless and Popish faction are designing and endeavouring to renew the rebellion within this kingdom, and an invasion from abroad, be destructive to the peace and security of the government."



1716. The Duke of Devonshire, on bringing in the bill, was supported by several peers, friends of the administration. On the day when the bill was read a second time, a debate arose upon the commitment; it was opposed by the Duke of Buckingham, Lords Peterborough, Nottingham, Anglesea, and the whole strength of the Tory party. On the other hand, it was supported by the Duke of Argyll, Lords Dorset, Carteret, Cowper, and other peers attached to the ministry. On a division, the commitment was carried by ninety-six votes to sixty-one. There were other divisions, but the numbers on both sides were smaller.\*

When the bill had passed the Lords, two of the judges were sent to carry it down to the House of Commons. Before the debate on the second reading, petitions against it were presented from the boroughs of Marlborough, Midhurst, Abingdon, Newcastle-under-Line, the town of Hastings, and the Corporation of Cambridge. Considering how much the boroughs were interested in frequent elections, it is astonishing no greater number of petitions should have been presented. The speakers on both sides included all the oratorical talent

\* It is to the last division of sixty-nine to thirty-six, that Mr. Coxe must have confined his attention, when he says that in the House of Lords there were only thirty-six voices against the bill. See his *Life of Walpole*.



of the House ; the principal of them, however, were 1716.  
Mr. Hampden, Mr. Molineaux, Sir Joseph Jekyll,  
Mr. Secretary Stanhope, for ; Mr. Shippen, Mr.  
Bromley, Sir Thomas Hanmer, Lord Guernsey,  
and Mr. Lechmere against, the bill.

On a division, there appeared two hundred and Bill passed.  
eighty-four for the bill, and one hundred and  
sixty-two against it. The bill was accordingly  
committed ; and on the 26th of April was passed  
by a very large majority.

The advocates for the bill recalled to mind, that  
the preamble of the Triennial Act declared that act  
to be intended “ for the better union and agreement  
of the King and his People :” they affirmed that in  
practice it had had quite a contrary effect, making  
all our measures, and the tenure of every adminis-  
tration, short and precarious : that foreign powers,  
observing this fluctuation, had feared to enter into  
engagements which the elections of the succeed-  
ing year might render void : that experience  
had verified what the late Earl of Sunderland had  
said of the Triennial Act at the time of its pass-  
ing ; “ that it made a triennial king, a triennial  
ministry, a triennial alliance.” That, by expe-  
rience, it had been found that the first year of  
a triennial parliament was spent in vindictive de-  
cisions and animosities concerning the late elec-  
tions : that the second entered into business

1716. indeed, but rather in a spirit of contradiction to former Parliaments than with a disinterested zeal for the public good ; and that the third languished in inaction, while the members were intent rather upon the approaching contest than on the true welfare of their country. That if it was right to repeal the triennial act, the present conjuncture made it highly expedient, if not absolutely necessary : that the Jacobites waited only for another election to kindle the inflammable matter of the nation, and snatch at the crown during the flames. That the argument which represented this change as a breach of trust was idle : the real trust reposed in Parliament was that of the public good, which they were bound at all times to consult as their primary and paramount duty.—On the other hand, the House was desired to recollect, that short and frequent Parliaments were the constitution of this nation ; that this great benefit, often suspended, often refused, but sought for by constant struggles and repeated laws, was at length solemnly secured to the nation by the triennial act, which could not be infringed without a breach of faith. That the pretences put forth to alarm men into the surrender of their dearest privileges were groundless and insincere. That when gentlemen spoke of the Government being rendered precarious by the triennial act, if they meant the King, it was

false ; if the Ministry, it was not the duty or the 1716.  
object of the House of Commons to perpetuate an  
administration. That when they said this change  
would encourage foreign powers to enter into  
treaties with us, they offered an insult to the  
country, which they required to give up its consti-  
tution to please foreign allies. But that, in fact,  
this bill would drive away our allies ; for it would  
teach them that the King did not dare to trust his  
people in a new choice. That as to the expenses  
and animosities of elections, they affected in-  
dividuals, but were not injurious to the public.  
Lastly, they said the House of Commons had no  
power to make this alteration : they were chosen  
for three years, and at the end of that term they  
no longer represented the people. King, Lords,  
and Commons could no more continue a Parliament  
beyond its natural duration, than they could make  
a Parliament. That this usurpation would create  
ten times more ferment than the apprehended  
elections, and it would be necessary to have a  
standing army to protect a standing Parliament.  
But why this haste ? Parliament had still two  
sessions to endure, and all apprehension of tumult  
might then have ceased.

On reviewing the arguments, it appears wonder-  
ful that the objection which denied the power of  
Parliament to prolong its own existence, should ever

1716. have imposed upon men of sound intellect. There could be no doubt that Parliament might, if it chose, repeal the Triennial Act, and in that case, the duration of Parliament might, according to former custom, have been extended during the whole of the King's reign. Nor does any one deny that the legislature might have made laws for the duration of the next Parliament; and according to those who propound the argument I am discussing, the people would then have been obliged to elect their representatives for ten or twenty years, without any remedy whatever. But to say that the supreme power could do those things, and yet has not the right to provide a remedy against a danger which threatened the very existence of the constitution, is evidently absurd.

On the other hand, the danger of the moment, though no doubt it was the chief motive of the Whigs for proposing the Septennial Bill, cannot be urged as a justification of a permanent measure of this kind. The crisis would have been passed over by suspending one election, and the people would then have returned to their rights, as they do to the right of personal security after the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act.

The measure must be tried then by its own merits upon the question, whether seven years is

a better period for a representative assembly, 1716. than three? If the assembly truly represents the people, the longer period is perhaps preferable to the shorter. The object of a representative government, is to obtain an assembly, to check and control the executive, in the name and on the behalf of the people. It is very desirable, undoubtedly, that the members of it should be obliged to justify the confidence reposed in them, by the necessity of returning for the renewal of their powers; but if the interval is made too short, instead of taking a large and extensive view of the whole interests of the government, they are forced to canvass the people on every particular question, and to yield to every gust of popular opinion. Thus the benefit of representative government is lost, and a select assembly becomes a no better instrument of deliberation than the populace of any large town. That members who hold their seats only for two years would be engaged in courting popular favour to an excess, seems but too probable. Perhaps, indeed, seven years may be a period unnecessarily long, but I am inclined to think three inconveniently short.

Another reason for the Septennial Bill, is derived from the strength which it was calculated to give the House of Commons. An assembly which sits only for two or three years, will perpetually change

1716. its spirit, and no reliance can be placed on its wishes or resolutions. But a body which is convoked annually for six years together, becomes fit for the purposes of government ; it learns to feel its own strength ; and by help of the power of refusing supplies, soon finds itself able to control every movement of the executive power. Indeed, this influence of the House of Commons, is by some considered as excessive and unconstitutional ; but I presume this argument is only used by those, who consider the constitution of the House of Commons so defective, as to make their interference in all cases an evil. Such an opinion does not appear to be well founded. For whatever may be the abuses which have crept into elections, there is yet so much of the popular element in the House of Commons, that the increase of their power must always be attended, to a certain degree, by the benefits which attend the control of the people over the conduct of their government,—a more careful attention to the interests, and some conformity to the enlightened opinion of the nation.

Parliament  
prorogued,  
June 26.

On the 26th of June, the Parliament was prorogued after a speech from the throne.

The events of the few years which we have gone over in this chapter, are of the greatest importance in the history of England. Three

great changes may be said to have been made, if 1716.  
not in the constitution, yet in the mode of administering it; changes which some will think equally beneficial, others equally pernicious, but which all tended to the establishment of the kind of government under which we now live.

The first principle established at this time, is that of conducting the government by one party. During the reign of William the Third, and the greater part of that of Anne, the offices of state were divided between the members of the two parties, with a view to conciliate both, and to exclude the more haughty and presumptuous leaders, from acquiring a dictation over the sovereign. In the middle of the reign of Anne, the Whigs obtained something like exclusive power; and towards the end of that reign the Tories possessed unbalanced authority; but their hesitation and misconduct totally deprived them of the confidence of the new King, and the Whigs found themselves strong enough to keep out their opponents for nearly half a century. From this time we may observe in the ministry of England, greater unity of views, a more complete confidence among the members of it, and a more uniform policy towards foreign powers.

Govern-  
ment by  
one party.

The second change made at this time, was the transfer of the seat of power from the House of



1716.  
Increased  
power of  
the House  
of Com-  
mons.

Lords to the House of Commons. During the two previous reigns, the House of Commons was still kept in a dependent station, and the great peers of the governing parties, confided to their deputies the management of that assembly. Their complete emancipation from their former bondage, is attributed by Speaker Onslow to the Septennial Bill, which, as I have already said, was calculated to produce this effect. It may be objected, however, that the appearance of Walpole on the stage of politics, at the time when the great men of the reign of Queen Anne were retiring from it, is sufficient to account for the power which the Commons at this period acquired. But had the House of Commons remained what it was, and Walpole obtained an equal ascendancy in the government, there can be little doubt that he would have procured a peerage, and directed the government from his seat in the House of Lords. His continuing a commoner, when at the head of the ministry of England, is the test and the proof of the increased consequence of the assembly to which he belonged.

New Title  
to the  
Crown.

The greatest change of all, however, was the establishment of a dynasty grounded on a parliamentary title. As long as a Stuart was upon the throne, it seemed not improbable that the crown might revert to the elder branch of the family:



the succession of the House of Hanover closed 1716. their prospect for ever. The advantage of this revolution to the cause of freedom cannot be too highly estimated. The old doctrine of the Tories always supposed that the King had a property in the prerogatives of the crown, independent of the consent and overbearing the interests of his people. But here was a king who had no other claim to his power, than that created by an act of the Parliament of Great Britain. Consequently, the great modern charter of our liberty, the Bill of Rights, was at once lifted from the debateable ground on which it stood, and placed by the side of the sovereign upon the throne; from this time resting on the same foundation, and exposed to no other dangers than those which equally menaced the existence of the dynasty. With such a protection, the laws which secure the personal freedom of Englishmen had time to take deep root in the country; and when, half a century afterwards, the Tories were restored to power, they found our liberties guarded not only by the zeal of a party, but by the veneration of a people. Nay, in the course of this half century, the ideas of the Tories themselves were changed, and instead of a legitimate King, and an uncurbed prerogative, they became satisfied with a title granted, and a government controlled by Parliament.

1716. Before I quit the subject of English affairs, I cannot omit the mention of three remarkable men, who died soon after the accession of the House of Hanover.

Character  
of Bishop  
Burnet.

In March 1715, died Bishop Burnet, in the 72nd year of his age. He preserved his senses to the last ; when informed of his danger, he behaved with the utmost calmness, spending his last hours in acts of devotion, and in giving affectionate advice to his family. Bishop Burnet has had many enemies ; his party zeal and inquisitive temper made him obnoxious to many of his contemporaries ; and the curious eye of posterity has discovered, in a long life, errors which he was too imprudent to avoid, and failings which he was too vain to conceal. But above all, he exposed himself to envy by his independence and disinterestedness, qualities which, rare as they are among mankind, are peculiarly uncommon in the body to which he belonged. “ His indifference for preferment,” says Lord Halifax, “ his contempt not only of splendour, but of all unnecessary plenty, his degrading himself into the lowest and most painful duties of his calling, are such unprelatical qualities, that let him be never so orthodox in other things, in these he must be a dissenter.”\* Burnet deserves our respect for having sacrificed his fortune

\* Character of Burnet. By Lord Halifax.

to his political opinions: in the reign of Charles 1716. the Second he refused to concur in the measures of that Prince, although offered the bishoprick of Chichester as the price of his compliance; and rather than submit to the violent tyranny of James, he cheerfully underwent the pains of exile and proscription. This honest conduct, admirable in any cause, deserves our respect the more, as no disgrace would have been incurred by embracing the opposite side. In the office of bishop, he was zealous, active, and benevolent. He looked upon himself, with regard to his episcopal revenue, as a trustee for the church, bound to expend the whole in the maintenance of a figure suitable to his station, in hospitality, and in acts of charity. So faithfully did he perform this trust, that at his death, no more of his episcopal revenues was left than was sufficient to pay his debts.\* At the same time he was an affectionate husband, and a most kind father. On the other side of the account, it must be owned that he was a prejudiced politician; and that his curiosity to get at the bottom of all state affairs, often exposed him to the ridicule of those, who would gladly have accused him of worse faults.

The History of his Own Times, which Burnet left behind him, is a work of great instruction and

\* Life, prefixed to his works.

1716. amusement, and the more interesting, as he seems to have relied almost entirely on his memory, and very little on the public relations of the events he relates. We thus have the impression of what was passing, as he received it from conversation and general opinion, instead of a mere detail of facts gleaned from the Gazette, and drawn upon the canvass without colour or perspective. That this method, together with his ignorance of parliamentary forms, has led him into some errors, it would be absurd to deny, but these faults do not detract from the general usefulness of his work. Philippe de Comines is so far mistaken in his facts, as to attribute an event to circumstances which followed, instead of preceding it; yet no one doubts the general accuracy and fidelity of his memoirs. The characters of Burnet, it must be added, are not to be relied upon so much as his narrative; he had many dislikes, and takes no means to overcome them.

Of Lord  
Halifax.

Another person of celebrity who died during this period, was Charles Montague, Earl of Halifax. During the war which followed the accession of King William, he had been made Chancellor of the Exchequer at a period of peculiar difficulty, when the coin was depreciated, the debts of the country in a state of confusion, and credit nearly gone. Calling the best heads of the kingdom to

his assistance, he in a short time restored the currency, consolidated the public debt, settled regular funds to provide for paying both interest and principal, and commenced in England that system of public credit, which has since been the cause both of her greatness and her sufferings. It is to Halifax that the plan of issuing exchequer bills of a small amount, is likewise to be attributed. What is curious, is, that his own favourite scheme of finance consisted in drawing a large revenue by direct, in preference to indirect taxation, and that he was praised by some of his contemporaries for the novel plan of raising the necessary supply, within the year in which it was required.\* Thus has the debt of Great Britain ever been augmented, upon the faith of her determination to make no debt!

At the end of April, 1716, died Lord Somers, Of Lord  
Somers a man whose name will ever be connected with the history of the liberties of England. His first efforts in a public cause were made in 1681; when he remodelled a pamphlet written by Algernon Sydney, in vindication of the acts of the two Parliaments which preceded the victory of arbitrary power. In the reign of James he was one of the counsel of the seven bishops, and a main instrument in bringing about the Revolution. He

\* Vide Burnet.

1716. was honoured with the intimate confidence of King William, and in the time of Anne was a principal member of the ministry which supported Marlborough. Finally, he had the greatest part in concerting the Union with Scotland, and the Regency Bill; two measures of the greatest importance to the Hanover Succession. Thus he was engaged in every contest that was fought on the side of liberty, from the complete defeat of the good old cause, towards the end of the reign of Charles the Second, to the final triumph of liberty and order by the establishment of the throne of George the First. His firmness, moderation, and wisdom, greatly contributed to this result; he used all his influence with the Whigs to induce them to support King William; and while he was the determined friend of freedom, he fully perceived the necessity of smoothing by mildness, rather than encountering by force, the obstacles that were opposed to the triumph of his opinions. He was gentle and attractive in his manners, always allowing to those with whom he conversed, the points in which he thought them right, before he disputed others on which he wished to convince them; he was possessed of great learning, a solid judgment, and was both a powerful orator in the senate, and a persuasive counsellor in the cabinet. "*Prodesse quam conspici,*" was his motto

and his maxim. He aspired to be useful to his <sup>1716.</sup> country, without the vain desire of attracting admiration to himself, and he received his reward in the warm attachment and grateful veneration of the people, to whose cause he devoted his life. He left many writings behind him published at various times, generally without his name. His sincere love of truth and liberty, and a plain forcible style, are remarkable in all of them; but in them, as in his actions, it is evident that he aspired rather to persuade others of what was to their advantage, than to make a display of his own eloquence and capacity. In this respect he was the very opposite of Bolingbroke. Finally, Lord Somers is a bright example of a statesman, who could live in times of revolution without rancour, who could hold the highest posts in a court without meanness, and who could unite mildness and charity to his opponents, with the firmest attachment to the great principles of liberty, civil and religious, which he early espoused, long promoted, and never abandoned.



## CHAPTER II.

*The Duke of Orleans invested with the Regency. His Policy to Foreign States. Affairs of Spain. Alberoni. War between Spain and the Quadruple Alliance. Dismissal of Alberoni. Peace: Barrier Treaty. Turkish War. Peace of Passarowitz.*

1715. BEFORE the funeral of Lewis the Fourteenth had been followed by the execrations of the populace, his memory had received an affront of a different kind from the nobility and parliament of France.

When the dying monarch had foretold that his will would not be observed, he little knew how near his prediction was to its accomplishment. The inclination of the Parliament, with the exception of the first president, De Mesmes, whose character was by no means respected, leant strongly in favour of the Duke of Orleans, and that prince had the good fortune to reckon D'Aguesseau and Joly de Fleury, the two most able and most upright of the magistrates, among the foremost of



his advisers. The precedents of the minorities of Lewis the Thirteenth and Lewis the Fourteenth, on both of which occasions the Parliament had annulled the dispositions of the monarch, were obvious examples for imitation, and the vanity of the magistrates could scarcely fail to be tempted by the opportunity of distributing at their pleasure, that sovereign power beneath which they had so long lain prostrate. The courtiers, on the other hand, seeing in the Duke of Orleans, the competitor most likely to be successful, had hastened to sell him their good offices, and one by one had pledged themselves to support his cause. Even the more moderate and respectable among the nobility had gone over to his party, from the time the life of Lewis had been despaired of.\* The popular feeling was likewise strongly in his favour; hatred of the Jesuits was the sentiment uppermost in the minds of all; and the nation was ready to take any chances rather than see the supreme power in the hands of a pupil of Madame de Maintenon, who was considered, however unjustly, the great instigator of religious persecution.

To all these motives for security, the Duke of Orleans added various precautions. For a sum of 150,000 livres he bought the Duke of Guiche, colonel of the French guards, who was supposed

\* Mémoires de Berwick.

1715. to be firmly attached to the Duke of Maine. Contades, major of the same corps, and Reynold, colonel of the Swiss guards, were gained by the like means; the place of assembly was surrounded by their troops, and soldiers dressed as citizens were mixed in the crowd which filled the hall of the Parliament. Lord Stair, the ambassador of England, attended in one of the galleries, and his presence was supposed to imply the favour of his court towards the Duke of Orleans.

With all these advantages, there could be little doubt on which side victory would incline. The ease, grace, and address of the Duke of Orleans, contrasted with the timidity, awkwardness, and hesitation of the Duke of Maine, adorned a triumph which had already been secured.

Sitting of  
the Par-  
liament.

It was on the day following the death of Lewis, that the rival candidates appeared before the assembled Parliament. The Duke of Orleans spoke first, and related, though with a troubled voice, the speech which he alleged had been addressed to him by the late king, beginning, "My Nephew, I have made a will, in which I have preserved to you all the rights to which your birth entitles you," and ending with the words, "I have made the dispositions which I thought the wisest; but as it is impossible to foresee every thing, if there is any thing amiss, it may be altered." After

giving this somewhat suspicious evidence, the 1715. Duke of Orleans desired the Parliament to decide at one and the same time, upon the title which he derived from his birth, and that which he might receive from the will. He added with infinite address, "In all that I shall undertake for the public good, I hope to be assisted by your counsels, and your wise remonstrances." He concluded with declaring, that he had no object at heart but to relieve the distresses of the people, to restore the finances, to maintain peace both at home and abroad, and to establish union and tranquillity in the church.

When the Duke of Orleans had finished, Joly de Fleury, the King's Advocate, rose and spoke upon the request he had made. He pronounced a panegyric upon his virtues, and prayed the Parliament to accede to his wishes, as just and reasonable.

The will itself having been thus previously undetermined, was now read.\* It produced the effect which might have been expected from an act so contradictory and anomalous. But above all, it was evident that the council named in it, contained no person capable of defending its provisions. Ministers without a name, marshals without reputation, courtiers without substance, were,

\* For an account of the will, see Book Ist. c. 1st.

1715, with some few exceptions, the component parts of an authority, raised up against the best precedents of the monarchy, and opposed to the pretensions of an able, vigorous, and ambitious prince. During the reading of the will a deep silence was observed; but when the reader came to the codicil, giving to the Duke of Maine the care of the King's education, and the command of the household troops, there arose a sullen murmur, which the president in vain endeavoured to suppress, by saying from time to time, "This is our law." As soon as the reading was finished, the Duke of Orleans began to speak, and after a few words of praise and regret on the memory of Lewis, protested strongly against the dispositions made for the government of the state, which he said he found it difficult to reconcile with what the late king had said to him; he hinted, looking at the Duke of Maine, that Lewis had not perfectly understood what he had been made to do; he declared that honour would not permit him to suffer the injury done to his birth, and he therefore claimed a full unrestricted regency, and desired that the Parliament would decide upon this claim, previously to considering the other articles of the will.

This speech made a great impression. The Duke of Maine wished to speak, but the Duke

of Orleans stopped him, saying, "Sir, you will speak in your turn." After another speech from the King's Advocate, who quoted various precedents, to show that the Regency had always been given to the nearest relation of the deceased monarch, a general acclamation proclaimed the Duke of Orleans Regent with full powers, and the intrigues of years were dissipated in a moment.

1715.  
The Duke  
of Orleans  
declared  
Regent.

Some discussion arose between the new Regent and the Duke of Maine, respecting the command of the household troops, attributed to the latter by the codicil. The Duke of La Force seeing that the Duke of Orleans was lowering himself into a personal altercation, advised him to adjourn the sitting till the afternoon. This measure was a master stroke. In the afternoon the Duke of Orleans renewed the requests he had previously made; he desired that he might have the choice of the council of regency, saying that he would in that case be quite willing to be bound by the vote of the majority; he asked however that he might be exempt from this restriction in distributing honours and employments, on the specious pretext, that he was willing to be tied down to prevent his doing harm, and only desired to be free in doing good; he forcibly represented the absur-

1715. dity of placing the command of the household troops in the hands of a person independent of the government; and finally requested, that the Duke of Bourbon might have immediate admission into the council, in direct contravention to the will. The lawyers of the crown supported these pretensions, and the Parliament were evidently prepared to confirm them. After a sullen resignation, therefore, from the Duke of Maine, of the whole of the power attributed to him by the will, except that of superintending the King's education, a decree was passed granting all the requests of the Duke of Orleans, who, in his turn, promised that, on a subsequent day, he would developé a plan for replacing the secretaries of state by councils. The sitting was then dissolved. The Regent was accompanied to his palace by the acclamations of an immense crowd, which had assembled to hear the result. Three years before he had received from the same people a very different treatment, but for their credit it must be said, he had likewise been in a very different situation: he was then pointed out by his uncle as the murderer of his cousin; he was now looked upon by every branch of the state as the deliverer of the nation from the miserable dominion of a monk and a mistress. It may be said, indeed, that the judgment of the

people was hasty, but it cannot be alleged that 1715.  
their feelings were perverted.\*

The first maxim of the new government was to be in every thing the opposite of the old. The foreign alliances, the domestic policy, the forms of administration, the manners of the court, were all changed. To condemn any measure, it was sufficient to say, "That is too like the old system."† The same persons, it is true, still sought, and many of them still obtained power and patronage, but it was by different means; their language, their actions, their very countenances were altered; their minds alone remained unchanged, stamped by the mark of indelible servility.

Spirit of the  
new go-  
vernment.

The change of measures promised, and in part begun by the Regent, was extremely pleasing to the people. The memory of Lewis the Fourteenth was pursued with a kind of popular fury; his name was never uttered but with indignation; his statues were covered with insulting placards, and it was scarcely safe to mention his reign with praise.‡ The Regent, at once to increase his

\* For the sitting of the Parliament, see the Procès Verbal in the *Mémoires de la Regence*, Saint Simon, Du-clos, and *Mémoires de Berwick*. In the account given above, I have weighed the unfaithful memory of Saint Simon against the official reserve of the Parliament.

† Bolingbroke, Letter to Wyndham.

‡ Vie de Philippe d'Orleans.



1715. popularity, and testify his gratitude, restored to the Parliament the power of making remonstrances, with the sole condition that they should be made within eight days after the deliberation upon the subject.\* Before entering, however, upon the subject of the internal government of France under the Regent, it may be convenient to exhibit a view of her external relations, and relate the attempt of the King of Spain to disturb the settlement of the peace of Utrecht.

Origin of  
the connexion  
between  
George I.  
and the  
Regent.

When Lord Stair had been despatched by the government of George the First, as Ambassador to the court of France, he found the King indisposed, both from the state of his health, and his ancient inclinations, to receive him with favour. Seeing that the reign could not last long, he turned his attention to the Duke of Orleans, who, he rightly conjectured, would soon become master of the state. An inferior agent of the name of Remond introduced him to the Abbé Dubois, a preceptor of the Duke, who was known to have much influence with him; to Canillac, a cynic, who loved the world (on both accounts a favourite with the Duke of Orleans), and through their means to the Duke of Noailles, then beginning to worship the rising sun. By the aid of these several persons, it was represented to the Duke of

\* Vie de Philippe d'Orleans.



Orleans, that as George was a kind of *usurper* 1715. on the throne of England, so likewise he would be an usurper in France, if the death of the young King should oblige him to assert his pretensions to the crown. That it was for the interest of two princes, in the same situation, to join their forces, but that it was more especially the interest of the Duke of Orleans, whose antagonist, Philip the Fifth, was armed with fleets and troops; while George, a king already in possession, had for his competitor a vagabond prince, destitute in condition, and desperate in fortune.\* They concluded, therefore, that the union would be altogether in favour of the Duke of Orleans, who would exchange an hypothetical promise, for a solid and powerful alliance.

This reasoning made a strong impression on the Prince. One of his most intimate friends, however, the Duke of St. Simon, made an able remonstrance against the policy proposed. He considered that the Tory party had a right to the gratitude of the Regent, as having alone saved France from the greatest misfortunes, prevented the invasion of the kingdom, and placed the crown of Spain upon the head of Philip. He thought that to abandon this party, in order to embrace another, which had always been hostile to French

\* St. Simon. Hardwicke Papers.

1715, interests, would cover the government with infamy, injure the national reputation in the eyes of Europe, and alienate for ever the men to whom France owed her deliverance, without diminishing the hatred and jealousy of their opponents.

Policy of  
the Regent.

The personal interests of the Regent, on this occasion, outweighed the gratitude of France, and the Jacobites were abandoned, for the sake of obtaining the friendship and support of the reigning King of England. Hence, the lukewarm behaviour of the Duke of Orleans to the friends of the Pretender in the rebellion of 1715, which we have seen in the last chapter ; and hence his connexion with George the First, which we shall soon find ripen into a more formal alliance. Indeed, upon his accession to the Regency, the Duke of Orleans made a proposal to confirm the treaty of Utrecht, as the basis of a more intimate union ; but this offer was rejected by the English ministry.\* They probably feared to show themselves to the English people as the maintainers of a treaty, against which they so violently declaimed. Perhaps, too, they were not yet fully resolved to maintain the peace of Utrecht.

Conduct of  
Lord Stair.

An anecdote is related with respect to the conduct of Lord Stair, on the occasion of the Pretender's crossing France to embark for Scotland,

\* Mémoires de Berwick. Flassan.

which I know not that I can notice any where so 1715.  
 well as in this place. It is said by Duclos and  
 others, that he applied to the Regent to have  
 the Chevalier arrested, naming the town through  
 which he was to pass on a certain day, and that  
 finding the Regent insincere in his promises of  
 compliance, he sent persons to assassinate the  
 Chevalier on the road. The first part of this  
 story is probably true ; it is also very likely that  
 Stair should have sent emissaries to watch the  
 journey of the Pretender ; but that he ever in-  
 tended to have him assassinated, is totally disbe-  
 lieved by Marshal Berwick, who mentions Lord  
 Mar, as concurring with him in opinion, that Stair  
 was incapable of an action so atrocious.\* This  
 justice is due to the memory of a spirited and able  
 man, who rendered great services to the liberties  
 of his country.

Let us now turn to the affairs of Spain. Philip Affairs of  
Spain.  
1714.  
 the Fifth, when confirmed on the throne, gave  
 way to that indolence of disposition, which was  
 his most prominent quality. It was in vain that  
 his royal grandfather in his instructions and de-  
 spatches, had advised him to govern for himself,  
 and submit to be led by no one ; a natural want  
 of energy in his own character, and the interested  
 activity of ambitious attendants, converted him

\* Mem. de Berwick, t. ii.

1714. into a puppet guided at the will of whoever had the most skill in directing the wires which moved him. Religious devotion and conjugal affection were his ruling passions ; or, to use the expression of Alberoni, he wanted nothing but a wife and a prayer-book.

Death of  
the Queen.  
Feb. 1714.

With a King of this disposition, the death of his Queen, which took place in February, 1714, was an occurrence of the greatest political importance, not only to Spain, but to Europe. Indeed, it may fairly be said, that the greater part of the wars and treaties of the first half of the eighteenth century were the consequences of this event. The Princess Orsini, who had so absolutely governed the Spanish, and made herself feared even by the French court, during the life of the late Queen, proceeded, without loss of time, to ruminate on the way of supplying the place of her deceased mistress. With this view, her first object was to possess herself of the means of obtaining constant access to the King. Philip, from grief or decency, had retired from the palace where the Queen had died, to the house of the Duke of Medina Celi: the Princess established herself in an adjoining convent of Capuchins, broke down the party walls which connected the two buildings, and caused a covered gallery to be made which formed a communication between

them. Thus enabled to visit the King at all times, she obtained a great ascendancy over his mind; and it has even been suspected that she wished to marry him herself. At the advanced age of seventy, such an attempt seems wild and improbable: yet the princess may have been tempted beyond the line of prudence by the example of Madame de Maintenon; and it is difficult, otherwise, to account for the disgust which Philip, even when obeying her orders, at this time conceived for her. 1714.

In the mean time the situation of the two parties, inspired the greatest curiosity in the court. Robinet, the King's confessor, being asked by him one day, what news there was from Paris, answered, "They say, Sire, at Paris, that your Majesty is going to marry the Princess Orsini." "Oh no, not that," replied the King dryly. That such was in reality his determination, the Princess Orsini was soon aware; and obliged, if she ever entertained the project, to relinquish it as hopeless, she endeavoured to find a wife for Philip, who might be formed by her instructions, and moulded by her will. On the day of the late Queen's funeral, while the mournful procession was passing along the road, the Princess was conversing in a balcony with Alberoni, the agent of the Duke of Parma at the court of Madrid. "We must pro-

1714. vide a new wife for the King," said the favourite, and proceeded to mention the names of several princesses. Alberoni raised objections to each, and added, "We must find one who is quiet and docile, and not likely to interfere in state affairs." "Where shall we discover such a person?" said the Princess. Alberoni went over the names of several, and then in a careless manner mentioned the daughter of the late Duke of Parma; adding that "she was a good girl, fat with the butter and cheese of the Picentine, brought up at the farm of her uncle Francis, the reigning Duke, severely educated by the German Princess, her mother, and accustomed to hear of nothing but needle-work and embroidery." He hinted at the same time on her claims in Italy, as the only means of regaining a footing in that kingdom. Elizabeth Farnese, thus artfully brought forward by the envoy of Parma, was the daughter of Odoardo Farnese, Duke of Parma, and of Dorothea Sophia, daughter of the Elector Palatine. Dorothea Sophia had married in second nuptials Francis, the reigning Duke of Parma. Her daughter was the heiress of the Duchy of Parma, and had claims upon that of Tuscany, her great grandmother having been a daughter of Cosmo the Second. Her sense and understanding were far above the representations of Alberoni. She spoke several languages with



great facility, had a cultivated taste, and concealed <sup>1714.</sup> beneath the artful dissimulation of an Italian, the lofty spirit and aspiring ambition of a Spaniard.

The Princess Orsini, whether deceived by Alberoni, or as other writers allege, forced to consent <sup>Marriage of the King.</sup> to a marriage already concerted between Alberoni and the Pope,\* agreed to place Elizabeth upon the throne of Spain. With the consent of Philip, she empowered Alberoni to ask her hand of the court of Parma, and privately obtained a dispensation from the Pope. The whole negotiation was kept secret, even from Lewis, to prevent, as it was pretended, the Emperor from obstructing a match calculated to give Spain a footing in Italy. The Count de Chalais, nephew of the Princess Orsini, who had been sent to Paris expressly to inform the King in general terms that his grandson wished to marry, was afterwards ordered to make a secret of the whole matter, and it was not till all was settled, that he was authorized to ask the formal consent of the King of France. Lewis, hurt and angry at the want of confidence shown by his grandson, answered, "Well, if he must marry, let him marry."

During the few months which elapsed between the death of the former Queen and the arrival of the new, the Princess Orsini absolutely directed <sup>Govern-ment of the Princess Orsini.</sup>

\* Histoire du C. Alberoni, by Rousset.

1714. the government of Spain. The Cardinal del Giudice, Inquisitor General, was removed from the government, and Orri, who had been formerly sent by the French ministry to Spain, was entrusted with the sole management of the finances. Orri was a person who had held a low office in the excise of France, and had been afterwards steward of the Duchess of Portsmouth. In the control of the affairs of Spain he certainly showed considerable talents. He brought under one system the complicated branches of the revenue, which had hitherto been directed by different chiefs, and had produced many jarring irregularities. The internal taxes were by him divided into twenty-one farms, each occupying a separate province: the customs were likewise simplified, and placed under the direction of the council of finances.

Ecclesiastical Reform.

Encouraged by his success, Orri, under the direction of the Princess, attempted an attack on the ecclesiastical body. Macanaz, attorney general of Castile, presented to the King a strong memorial, complaining of the abuses of sanctuary, the civil immunities of the clergy, and the exorbitant power of the tribunal of the Papal nuncio. Philip was somewhat struck by the facts thus laid before him; not daring however to take any decisive step, he referred the memorial to the council of Castile. But in Spain the subjects of the King were the slaves of the church; the Inquisition was informed



of the memorial, and instantly denounced it as heretical. The sentence was affixed on the walls of every church in the kingdom, and even on the palace of the King of France, at Marly; it was signed by Del Giudice, then residing at Paris, and contained, besides a denunciation of the offensive memorial, a condemnation of two French authors, Barclay and Talon, the latter of whom was at this very time a member of the Parliament of Paris. This astonishing insolence excited at first the indignation of the Spanish monarch. On a previous occasion, Macanaz had represented to him in the strongest manner, in a private audience, that the ecclesiastical power was making every day new encroachments upon the royal authority; that the right of sanctuary was extended beyond the churches to the contiguous shops and dwellings; that the monastic houses were always accumulating fresh property, which thenceforth became inalienable, and free from all direct tax; that the church had more subjects in the kingdom than the crown; that the tribunal of the nuncio had usurped a despotic authority within the realm, and that unfaithful ministers, especially one whom he named, had favoured all these abuses, in order to obtain rich benefices for their relations and friends.\* On the appearance of the Inquisitorial sentence, Macanaz

\* San Phelipe, t. ii. p. 123.

1714. obtained another audience, pointed out the insolence and disloyalty of the holy office, in attacking a memorial which the King himself had referred to his sworn counsellors, and represented the personal danger to which he was exposed when acting in the capacity of minister of the crown. Philip, roused by these remonstrances, banished from court Don Luis Curiel, the minister pointed at by Macanaz, and a Dominican friar who supported him. But the people, ever strongly attached to their faith, and the clergy, ever anxious for their temporal interests, caught the alarm, and instantly raised the cry that religion was in danger. Philip therefore, with his usual weakness, submitted the question to a council of theologians, who naturally decided that the memorial in question was full of errors; that its condemnation by the Inquisition was legal and proper; and that the King would act against the canons, if he interfered to prevent the trial and punishment of Macanaz by the Holy Office. The only point which they decided in favour of the King was, that Del Giudice, when out of the kingdom, had no right to sign the sentence. Philip, therefore, taking up the shred of authority, of which he was not stripped by his subjects, ordered Del Giudice to resign his office, and appointed two new members of the council of the Inquisition, with a design, it would appear, of

subjecting that tribunal to his authority, if not of remodelling and totally reforming it. But the Pope, fearing that the royal power would gain strength against the Inquisition,\* refused to accept the resignation of Del Giudice; and the sacred tribunal itself would not admit the new members named by the King, on the ground that the Pope, and their own body, alone had the power of appointment. 1714.

In this juncture it behoved Philip to take a vigorous step, and clear his authority from priestly usurpation. Whether he would have done so, had the Princess Orsini and Orri remained in power, is uncertain. The effeminate character of Philip, indeed, made him incapable of conceiving any large or bold views, but the masculine understanding of the Princess had marked the nature of the disease of the Spanish monarchy, and was fully prepared with the most vigorous remedies. In the midst of these schemes, however, she was alarmed at hearing that the future Queen had an understanding superior to deception, and a temper above control. She instantly despatched the most pressing orders to suspend the conclusion of the marriage. Her messenger arrived at Parma, on the very morning of the ceremony; but as the object of his journey was suspected, he was stopped at the gates, and Sept. 16.

\* The express words of San Phelipe.

1714. induced by a mixture of bribes and threats to delay his entrance to the following day. The object was defeated, and the intention was not forgotten.

Disgrace of  
the Prin-  
cess Orsini.

In a few days after the marriage ceremony the young Queen set out for Spain, and going by sea from Sestri to Genoa, made the rest of the journey by land. On her way she stopped two days at Bayonne to confer with the Queen Mother. When she approached Madrid, the Princess Orsini, full of schemes for retaining all real power in her own hands, set out to meet her mistress. But how different was the destiny of this aspiring favourite! She was resting at a small village called Xadraca, when the Queen arrived. She instantly quitted the table where she was taking some refreshment, went to the foot of the stairs, and kneeling, kissed the hand of the Queen. Elizabeth allowed herself to be conducted to the apartment prepared for her, but scarcely had the Princess begun the usual compliments, before the Queen angrily interrupted her, found fault with her dress and manner,\* and when the Princess attempted a submissive apology, instantly silenced her, and calling to the guard, cried, "Turn out that mad woman who has dared

\* It was said by the Queen's friends as an excuse for her, that the reproaches on dress came from the Princess; but this version is totally disbelieved by Madame de Maintenon, and is quite improbable.

to insult me." She even pushed her out of the 1714.  
apartment, and summoning the officer on duty, commanded him to arrest the Princess, and conduct her to the frontier. On his expressing some hesitation, the Queen said, "Have you not his Majesty's command to obey me without reserve?" The officer confessed he had; but was still so thunderstruck with this sudden change, that he declined to obey till he had a written order: the Queen instantly wrote the order on her knee. The Princess was then obliged, without changing her dress, to put herself into a coach, in which, accompanied by one female attendant and two officers, she was conducted during the whole night towards the frontier. For a long time she imagined that Philip would resent the conduct of his Queen, but after two days vain expectation, her two nephews joined her with a cold and formal letter from the King, promising merely that her pensions should be duly discharged. She then assumed a countenance of resignation, and without a tear or a sigh, a complaint or an invective, pursued a journey, accompanied by every circumstance of misery and inconvenience, till at length, after twenty-three days travelling, she reached St. Jean de Luz. The guards, her attendants, who had at first been struck with astonishment at the change of her fortunes, left her in admiration of the fortitude

1714. with which she bore it.\* The remainder of the life of this remarkable woman contains little worthy of notice. She wrote to Madame de Maintenon from St. Jean de Luz, in a style of affected philosophy, "I now inhabit," she said, "a small house near the sea: I see that element sometimes calm, but oftener agitated; fit emblem of courts, and of what I have seen: of what indeed has recently happened to me, which must excite your generous compassion." Madame de Maintenon, if she did not feel pity, affected it, and by her influence the Princess again fluttered for a short time about Versailles. A few years afterwards a reconciliation between Philip the Fifth and the Duke of Orleans involved her in a new disgrace and she was obliged to leave the court of France for ever. Unable, however, to bear a private life, she never resided at a magnificent house, built by her direction at Chanteloup; but still haunting the precincts of royalty, never rested till, after new intrigues, she obtained permission to go to Rome, where she did the honours of the mock court of the Pretender. She died in 1722.

We must now return to the court of Spain, where the causes of the disgrace of the Princess were long matter for speculation and conjecture. It was naturally supposed that Alberoni had a

\* St. Simon, t. v. p. 227.



main hand in this intrigue ; but the fact is, he 1714.  
was totally ignorant of the design until he was informed of it by the Queen herself, when he met her at Pamplona. At first he endeavoured to dissuade her from so bold an attempt, but she threw upon the table a note of the King, which put an end to all objection. The note was a curious one, and was itself a proof of the influence which Philip was so desirous to shake off. He told his bride to dismiss the Princess, because, if allowed to remain, she would interfere and prevent harmony between them ; warning her at the same time not to delay her measures, “ for if she converses with you only two hours, she will captivate you.” \* This note seems to give the clue to the whole affair : Philip was too weak not to be governed by the superior talents and spirit of the Princess ; but he felt acutely the bondage in which he was kept by the haughty and humiliating dominion of a woman, whose personal attractions had long ceased. It is probable, likewise, that some of his ecclesiastical advisers had alarmed his piety, with respect to the course he was taking

\* According to Duclos, the note finished in these words.  
“ Au moins prenez bien garde de ne pas manquer votre coup tout d’abord, car si elle vous voit seulement deux heures, elle vous enchainera, et nous empêchera de coucher ensemble, comme avec la feue reine.” Duclos, t. i.

1714. on the subject of the Inquisition. In this perplexity, like all weak kings, hating his minister, whom he was yet afraid to face, he employed the agency of the new Queen to get rid of her, without the difficulty of encountering her reproaches or entreaties.

The banishment and disgrace of the Princess Orsini, was accompanied by a total change in the conduct of affairs. The Cardinal Del Giudice was immediately restored to his functions, and the Inquisition flourished again in full vigour. This was chiefly accomplished by the intrigues of a man of whom it is necessary to speak more fully.

Alberoni. Giulio Alberoni was the son of a labouring gardener in the suburbs of Placentia: when a boy he had been servant to a parish clerk, in which situation he had attracted the notice of a priest, who, struck by his intelligence, taught him reading and the rudiments of the Latin tongue. His merit procured him patrons, and he became in the course of time a prebendary in the cathedral of Placentia, and tutor, or companion, to the nephew of the bishop. Happily for him the French, in their advance to Parma and Placentia, committed such exactions, that the Bishop of St. Domino was appointed by the Duke to intercede with their commander, and Alberoni was employed as interpreter. But the coarse and filthy manners of Vendome so



disgusted the Bishop, that, after the first interview 1714. he became averse to the business, and soon transferred the whole affair to Alberoni. Alberoni not only succeeded for his master, but so delighted Vendome by complying with his gross manners, dressing Italian dishes for him, and playing the part of a buffoon, that he took him with him to France, and recommended him to Lewis the Fourteenth for a pension. Vendome, when afterwards in Spain, introduced him to the court of Madrid, where he soon obtained great reputation for address, and at length wriggled himself into the office of envoy of Parma. In this situation, ever active, intriguing, and ambitious, he contrived, as we have seen, to secure a patroness upon the throne. The first use he made of his power was to place in the hands of the Queen, in his first interview, the memorial of Macanaz, with a view of exciting her indignation against the ruling ministers of Spain.\* In this enterprize he too well succeeded; and the revolution, which restored the Inquisition, raised him to the conduct of affairs.

When, by the steps that we have traced, Alberoni acquired a predominant influence in the councils of the monarchy, he soon found himself called to a task so difficult, not to say impossible, that it

\* Letter of Alberoni to Cardinal Paolucci, in the *Istoria del C. Alberoni*.

1714-15. is no disparagement to his talents if he failed in accomplishing it. He was required to make large accessions to the Spanish dominion, against the will of all the great powers of Europe, with the forces of a weak, exhausted, and disjointed monarchy. But in order to understand the events which follow, it is necessary to take a view of the state of Europe at this time.

State of  
Europe.  
Projects of  
the Queen  
of Spain.

The abandonment of their allies by the English ministry previously to the peace of Utrecht, produced, among other bad effects, a hasty and temporary arrangement, instead of a solid and permanent settlement of the continent. The Emperor, although obliged to desist from pursuing his pretension by force of arms, refused to resign the title of King of Spain, and forming a council at Vienna of those Spaniards who adhered to his party, publicly called it the Spanish council, and professedly entrusted it with Spanish affairs. Philip the Fifth, on his part, saw with reluctance the Austrians take possession of Lombardy, and still cherished in his mind, the favourite idea of repossessing himself of the Italian dominions of Spain.

These projects of aggrandizement in Italy became therefore the chief topic of deliberation with Alberoni, and how to accomplish them was, by

day and night, the object of his anxious and ambitious reflections. 1715.

In the first place it was evident, that nothing could be immediately done by the forces of Spain alone. Reduced to a state of insignificance by the weakness of the Austrian princes, and the tyranny of the church, Spain had come out of a long war, if not essentially impoverished, yet completely destitute of means at the immediate disposal of the state. To bring the kingdom to an equality with other European states, it was necessary to reform all the departments of the government, and to rouse the nation from that apathy in which it had long slumbered. To these objects the attention of Alberoni was incessantly applied. He saw with a glance how rich in resources was the country, how energetic in character the people; but he likewise saw, that time and patience would be necessary before the ore of the mine could be converted into current coin. With an over-sanguine persuasion of his capacity, he continually said to Philip, "If your Majesty will maintain your kingdom in peace for five years, I will pledge myself to render you the most powerful monarch in Europe."\* But his master, eager for glory, and impatient of labour, demanded immediate triumph; and as none are so little sensible of difficulties as those who are totally

\* Letter of Alberoni to Cardinal Paolucci.

1715. incapable of overcoming them, the minister found it necessary to resort to other means. As Spain, therefore, could not at that time undertake a war single-handed with any reasonable prospect of success, the next question was, whether it might not be possible to form such alliances, that the Emperor would be compelled to yield, without a struggle, the territories which she coveted. Such appears to have been the ultimate plan of Alberoni. Yet a very rapid view will convince us that it was as difficult, not to say as hopeless a project, as the more warlike schemes of Philip himself.

The four great powers who had taken a part in the war of the Spanish succession were France, the Empire, England, and Holland. Of these four, the Emperor was the object of the present attack. As to France, the diplomatic relations between her and Spain were far from being amicable. Philip considered the Regency his due, as the nearest of blood to the young King; he heard therefore with indignation that his claims had been totally overlooked, and that the Duke of Orleans had possessed himself of the whole power of the monarchy. He still, however, kept his eye fixed on the succession to the French crown, and consequently regarded the Regent as a rival, against whom he should have to contend for the throne by force of arms. The Regent, on his side, was

fully aware of the disposition of his cousin, and 1715.  
omitted no means of exciting dissensions, which  
might weaken his authority in Spain. He des-  
patched orders to his ambassador at Madrid, to  
keep up a close connexion with the Spanish mal-  
contents, of whom there were many among the  
grandees and nobles; and above all, to omit no  
artifice for making a quarrel between Alberoni and  
D'Aubenton, the jesuit confessor. For this pur-  
pose he was directed to spread reports that the  
latter was entirely devoted to France, to make him  
frequent visits, and if they were observed, to affect  
a mystery, which should still further excite sus-  
picion. "Recollect," said the Regent, "that D'Au-  
benton is a man of great cunning, and very closely  
connected with Alberoni, and that you could  
render no more essential service to the state than  
to make them quarrel, with the view of ruining  
both." \*

In this state of affairs, of which Alberoni was  
fully aware, it was out of the question to look to  
an alliance with France: he therefore turned his  
eyes to the maritime powers—England and Hol-  
land. With England especially, some causes of  
misunderstanding remained, which it was in the  
power of the new minister to do away, and thus  
obtain a claim on the gratitude of the British

Policy of  
Alberoni.

\* Mém. de Noailles.

1715. court. In the peace of Utrecht, some explanatory articles had been inserted, which placed the commerce of England with Spain in a much worse situation than it had stood during the reign of Charles II. The affair of the Assiento, likewise, was by no means settled; and these points of difference had hitherto been treated by the Spanish ministers, with all that spirit of enmity to Great Britain, which was the natural consequence of the long and bloody war, so lately concluded. On this ground, then, Alberoni began to work; his first appearance on the stage of foreign politics is thus described in a letter from Mr. Doddington, then envoy at Madrid, to Secretary Stanhope, Sept. 1715, dated September 20, 1715. “Baron Ripperda informs me that he received a message to repair to court, where a person waited to speak with him, by order of the King. He went, and found a gentleman of great consequence, who, he says, showed him a power from the King, authorising him to speak on the part of his Majesty. They talked much relative to Dutch affairs, on which full satisfaction was promised. Afterwards the gentleman desired him to come to me this evening, and inform me, as from the King, that his Majesty was perfectly disposed to live in good understanding with my Sovereign. To give all imaginable proofs of it, he was ready to consent to annul the expla-

natory articles, and to do every thing calculated to 1715.  
promote a good intelligence between his Britannic Majesty and himself. Of this the gentleman desired I would apprize my sovereign this night.”\*

These professions were followed by acts fully corresponding to them. In a very short time a new treaty was signed, abrogating the explanatory articles, and restoring England to the commercial advantages she had enjoyed under the Austrian Princes.† To the Cardinal Del Giudice, who, astonished at the change of policy of his court, ventured to remonstrate, the King replied shortly, but decisively, “ I consider the King of England as my brother, and am determined to live in friendship with him. Let me hear no more on this subject.”‡ Philip even consented to set his name 1716.  
to a paper, declaring his determination to give no support to the Pretender and his adherents; and this declaration being published, contributed much to discourage the Jacobite party in every country of Europe.

At this time the birth of a son made the Queen Jan. 1716.  
look, if possible, with still greater anxiety to Italy than Philip himself. To provide a sovereignty for

\* Coxe's *Memoirs of Spain*, c. 24.

† Treaty of Commerce between Spain and England.  
Dec. 1715.

‡ Coxe's *Memoirs of Spain*, c. 24.



1716. this son sufficiently large to make him independent, became the favourite object of her policy, and through her of the cabinet of Madrid. "In a word," says Mr. Doddington, after expatiating on the influence of Elizabeth, "the absolute control over Spain will belong to *the highest bidder for the Queen's son*. This is the grand and only maxim, which has never changed since I have been here."\*

Overtures  
to England.

Alberoni having obtained from his sovereign such large concessions in favour of England, began now to insinuate to the English envoy, that Spain would expect an equivalent. The Emperor of Germany had lately availed himself of a very slight pretext for attacking the republic of Genoa, and his troops had actually entered and occupied Novi. Upon this intelligence, Alberoni warmly appealed to the King of Great Britain as a guarantee of the neutrality of Italy. He even endeavoured to engage England in a strict alliance to preserve the existing state of things in that country; and the English minister at Madrid informed the cabinet at home, probably on good grounds, that, a guaranty of the states of Parma and Tuscany to the Queen, and an English fleet to support the Spanish squadron in the Mediter-

\* Mr. Doddington to Secretary Stanhope, June 15, 1716. Coxe, *Memoirs of the Kings of Spain*, c. 25.



ranean, would, in his opinion, secure from Spain 1716.  
the most ample guaranty for the Hanover succession, and the most favourable arrangement of commercial interests.

These offers and insinuations placed George the First in a singular position. For a long period France had waged war against England, for the purpose of placing a member of her royal family on the throne of Spain, and securing the intimate alliance and support of that once powerful kingdom. During the same period the kingly title had been acknowledged to reside in James the Second, while the Elector of Hanover was considered in no other light than as a pretender, whom it was allowable to defeat by any means, and on any opportunity. Yet strange to say, the governments of France and Spain were at this moment, only one year after the death of Lewis the Fourteenth, contending which should purchase the alliance of England, and which should offer the most valuable security for the succession of the House of Brunswick! Two or three fortuitous events, the death of the two Dauphins, and the regency of the Duke of Orleans, had dissolved the connexion of the members of the Bourbon family, raised again those Pyrenees, which the memorable saying of Lewis had asserted to exist no longer, and scattered into air the pro-

1716. jects, the treaties, the wars, the victories, and the treasons of many years. The English ministry suddenly saw itself made the umpire of Europe, and placed in a situation almost as favourable as if the Grand Alliance had succeeded in their objects, and Bolingbroke had never been entrusted with power. So vain and fruitless are frequently the most subtle speculations of statesmen, and the most bloody encounters of hostile armies!

The offers of Spain, though gratifying to England, were not, however, the most advantageous that were made to her. If she accepted the proposals of Alberoni, she must be prepared to offend her old ally the Emperor, to excite new troubles in Italy, and to enter upon a new war, with no other friend than Spain, whose adherence, not cemented by natural interest, must be precarious and temporary. On the other hand, if she connected herself with the Emperor and France, she maintained an ancient alliance, obtained the guaranty of a great kingdom to the Protestant succession, secured by the personal interest of the Regent, and formed an union of powers strong enough to maintain the peace of Europe against all who might endeavour to disturb it. With these advantages were intimately connected the internal peace of Great Britain, and the safety of the reigning family. Impressed with considerations

so weighty, the English minister returned a civil refusal to the proposals of Alberoni. “His Majesty,” said Secretary Stanhope, “is perfectly disposed to enter into a new treaty with the Catholic King, to renew and confirm the past; but the actual situation of affairs does not permit him to form other engagements, which, far from contributing to preserve the neutrality of Italy, would give rise to jealousies tending to disturb it.”\*

In pursuance of these views, the King of England entered into an alliance with the Emperor for the reciprocal defence of their respective territories. The treaty contained a clause guaranteeing such future acquisitions as they should make by mutual consent. After this the Abbé Dubois repaired to the Hague, and subsequently to Hanover, to treat with George the First. In June an agreement was made between France and England, by which the succession of the crown of France, according to the provisions of the treaty of Utrecht, was guaranteed on the one side, and on the other, a similar guaranty was provided for the Hanover succession; the fortifications of Dunkirk were to be razed, and the Pretender to be sent beyond the Alps. In this treaty every stipulation was advantageous to England; for so happy was her position, that the exclusion of the King

1716.

May, 1716.

Treaty between England and France.  
June, 1716.

\* Mr. Stanhope to Mr. Doddington, March 13th, 1716

1716. of Spain from the succession to the French crown, which had so long been the aim of her policy, was become, by the accession of the Duke of Orleans to the Regency, an object still dearer to the French than to the English cabinet.

Triple Al-  
liance.  
Jan. 4,  
1717.

These arrangements with France were, in the beginning of 1717, consolidated into an alliance between England, France, and Holland, called the Triple Alliance. It seems to have been understood among these powers, that the Emperor should have Sicily in exchange for Sardinia, which he had received by the treaty of Utrecht.

Upon the first intelligence of the treaty between England and the Emperor, Philip was greatly incensed. Yet, although the King was angry and his agent mortified, they were both sensible that, except from the maritime powers, they had no chance of receiving any assistance in their projects. It could never be disguised that the Duke of Orleans and Philip the Fifth were necessarily rivals, and that each was busily employed in fomenting cabals and gaining partizans in the country of the other. Alberoni, therefore, endeavoured to lure the British ministry alternately by threats and promises. He gave secret orders to the agents of the government not to execute the late treaty of commerce, while, on the other hand, he protested to the English minister, that he had no power to

counteract the influence of the Spanish counsellors. 1717.

Not having as yet any ostensible situation, he was easily enabled to put off, upon his pretended insignificance, any thing he did not choose to perform.

“Alberoni,” says Mr. Doddington, “who has the power, is in no public situation, and is to be seen and applied to, only when, and by those that he thinks proper. So that those to whom we can always apply, have not the authority, and those who have the authority, are not to be engaged further than they themselves please.”\*

Alberoni made a curious use of this incognito upon the occasion of a French mission to Madrid. The Marquis of Louville, an early favourite of Philip, was sent by the Regent with the hope of restoring the French influence. While the ambassador intrigued with the malcontents, Louville was directed to gain the confidence of Alberoni, in order to procure, by his means, the dismissal of the confessor, and some of the persons most attached to the minister, after which it was supposed the overthrow of Alberoni himself would become an easy task. † Besides this disingenuous intrigue, Louville seems to have been authorized, on the part of the King of England, to offer Gibraltar

Mission of  
Louville.  
July, 1717.

\* Coxe, chap. 25.

† Mémoires de Louville, t. ii. p. 202.

1717. to Spain as the price of peace.\* Whatever his mission might have been, however, Alberoni, distrusting the secret part of it, was determined not to let it succeed. For this purpose, as soon as Louville arrived in the character of a private gentleman at Madrid, he received an order enjoining his instant departure. Two hours afterwards, while he was still agitated by this unexpected repulse, Alberoni walked into the room, loaded him with compliments, and expressed surprize and sorrow at hearing of the manner in which he had been received. Won by this sympathy, Louville showed his full powers, which he had been ordered to reserve till the last extremity, and demanded an audience; but Alberoni, walking up and down the room, exclaimed in great emotion, "This is a terrible court; people believe that I have credit; but in fact I have none!" Louville could obtain no more; the order for his departure indeed was suspended, but such representations were made to the

\* Mr. Coxe doubts this fact; but it is put out of question by the words of Louville himself. "L'Abbé Dubois qui fait le traité en Hanovre, a mandé que mon rappel précipité d'Espagne avait un moment fait hésiter. On a douté de la bonne foi, ou tout au moins de la fermeté de M. le Régent dans l'alliance, après le sacrifice généreux de Gibraltar que le roi Georges nous avait autorisé à proposer en son nom." *Mém. de Louville*, ii. c. 24.

Regent, that he was recalled without having been 1717.  
able to obtain an audience.\*

Alberoni still continued to court the good will of the English, and to place his hopes on his means of favouring the commerce of England. He was greatly pleased at receiving a letter of compliment and amity from Secretary Stanhope, who, when a prisoner at Saragossa, during the war, had formed an acquaintance with him. Alberoni in reply hinted that some English horses would be acceptable to the Queen; and as an excuse for delay in the business of commerce, said, "it is difficult to engage a young lady in examining matters of trade." By his intrigues, he was at length enabled to assume ostensibly, that direction of affairs, which he had long secretly held. The Cardinal Del Giudice was deprived of all his ministerial offices, except his place in the council of state, and seeing at last that his disgrace could not be averted, he obtained the papal permission to relinquish the office of Great Inquisitor, and retired to Rome.

Alberoni, augmenting his ambition the more he was able to satisfy it, now employed all his arts to obtain a Cardinal's hat: with this view he induced the King to send a squadron, with a land force of 8000 men, to assist the Venetians in the defence of

\* Mém. de Noailles, t. v. p. 42, July, 1717. Mém. de Louville.



1717. Corfu, and these troops arriving at a critical moment, were fortunate enough to save the place. This exploit procured for Alberoni both the promise of a hat, and a pretext for making fresh military and naval preparations in the ports of Spain. He now concluded the Assiento treaty with the English minister, and promised a full and exact execution of the late treaty of commerce.

Proposals  
of the  
Allies.

No sooner was the triple alliance ratified, than the powers who formed it proposed terms calculated, in their opinion, to satisfy both the Emperor and Philip, and consolidate the peace of Europe. To the Emperor they offered Sicily in exchange for Sardinia; to the Duke of Savoy, Sardinia in the place of Sicily; and to Spain, the reversion of Tuscany and Parma, for the Queen and her issue. The Emperor was overjoyed to obtain Sicily, the object of his ambition; the Duke of Savoy was obliged to submit to the unequal exchange proposed to him; but the court of Spain peremptorily refused to acquiesce in the arrangement. The lofty pretensions of the King and his consort will best be collected from the language used by Alberoni upon the propositions which had been made by Mr. Stanhope to Beretti Landi, the Spanish ambassador at the Hague. "He (Alberoni) afterwards spoke," says Mr. Doddington, "of the proposals that had been made concerning the states of



Tuscany and Parma. The King, he said, did 1717. not look upon them to be sufficient to establish a balance, though they were even to be yielded up by treaty to one of the Queen's children; for while the Emperor was so strong in Italy, he would always be the master to keep his word or not; and a thousand occasions might happen in time, which might incline him to break it. Further; that by this the King would be obliged to renounce for ever *all his past pretensions in Italy, which he might make good on a proper occasion*, for the sake of rights, which might perhaps never, or late, fall into his hands; (there still surviving three in one house, and two in the other) and even when they should fall, might not be faithfully preserved, there being but a simple verbal promise in his favour, and the other party having all the strength.\*

Affairs were in this state, warlike preparations were making in the Spanish ports, the allies still bent upon negociation, when an event occurred which set fire to the mine. Don Joseph Molines, the Spanish ambassador at Rome, had been appointed Great Inquisitor in Spain in the room of Cardinal Del Giudice. He was traversing the Milanese, on the way to his destination, upon the faith of a papal safe-conduct, and the verbal promise of the Imperial ambassador, when he was

Arrest of  
Molines.

\* Coxe's Mem. of Spain.

1717. arrested by the Austrians, confined in the castle of Milan, and his papers sent to Vienna. This outrageous violation of the law of nations, committed for the purpose of obtaining an insight to the designs of Spain upon Italy, so greatly roused the indignation of Philip and his Queen, that they resolved upon instant war. To this resolution they were partly incited by the Marquess of San Phelipe, the Spanish minister at Genoa, who, on sending an account of the transaction, gave his opinion, that the King ought to go to any extremity, rather than submit to such an insult.

Alberoni, as he affirms, saw with grief and consternation, this abrupt determination of his sovereigns. The kingdom was hitherto unprepared to make any great effort without assistance ; the navy was scarcely formed ; the reforms in finance and administration too recent to be available. Catalonia, Aragon, and Valencia, were not yet reconciled to the Bourbon dynasty ; and so great was the discontent prevailing even at Madrid, that Philip had, a few weeks before, asked of the King of Great Britain permission to levy 3000 Irish troops to guard his person and court. The grandees were engaged in cabals against the government, and every sinew of the state was still paralysed by the vices of the despotic and feeble government that had so long prevailed. On the other hand,

the attempts of Alberoni to form alliances abroad, 1717. had completely failed ; England and Holland were engaged with France and the Emperor in resisting the projects of Spain. The attempt to make war single-handed against the Emperor, would probably only serve to furnish the House of Austria with a pretext for sending a new army into Italy, to occupy the States of Parma and Tuscany ; while the long continuance of hostilities could not fail to exhaust Spain, and strengthen her enemies.

These reasons, and many others, were ably urged by Alberoni, in a letter addressed to the Duke of Popoli, who had advised Philip in favour of war. Placing the disadvantages of such a course in the strongest light, he thus concludes : “ In a word, this is leading the world to imagine that a *few mād Italians*, from a passion for their native country, have urged the King to the extermination and ruin of Spain. Without allies, the Catholic King cannot hope to conquer Italy ; particularly at a time when he has neither troops, nor money, nor able commanders. With three provinces more disloyal than ever, with the people provoked, the nobility discontented, and deprived as we are of all human assistance, we are not able, according to your excellency’s phrase, to oppose force to force. Lastly, in such an important affair, I want the courage of your excellency to say, or to think, that

Advice of  
Alberoni.  
June, 1717.

1717. notwithstanding so many difficulties, we ought to throw ourselves into the hands of providence, and trust to the justice of our cause. This I declared to their Majesties, on the first word with which they honoured me on the subject; and I should be most happy, even were the enterprize attended with the most happy result, that the world should know, my weak judgment did not approve of it.\*

This letter was communicated to the King by the Duke of Popoli, who at the same time confessed himself converted by the arguments used in it. The letter of the Duke of Popoli to Alberoni on this subject, is the master-piece of a courtier. He protests, that he only gave his opinion in favour of war, because he supposed that to be the prevalent wish at court, and pathetically laments that, being detained by the gout at home, he cannot conform his judgment in time to that of Alberoni. The most amusing part is that, after all, he miscalculated the effect of the Cardinal's letter, and lost favour by his mean retractation. Philip, enraged at seeing his favourite plan thwarted, sent D'Aubenton to Alberoni, with the letter, in the hope that he would disavow it, but Alberoni at once owned the letter, and maintained the sentiments he expressed. D'Aubenton took his declaration in writing, and then observed, "I decide

\* Coxe, Vol. 2, pp. 273, 274. *Istoria del C. Alberoni.*

for war; and I must candidly inform you, that 1717.  
your refusal will exasperate the King, and may  
expose you to disgrace."

In spite of this friendly hint, Alberoni continued to oppose the project of the war, and urged his master to direct his armament against the Infidels, either of Turkey or Africa, instead of plunging at once, half armed, into an unequal combat with all the powers of Europe. But Philip would not listen to reason; and Alberoni, rather than resign his power, or as it is more politely expressed, sacrificing himself to his love for his sovereign, applied to the council of state, and obtained their approbation for the war.

Such is the account which Alberoni gives of his own conduct: it is supported by the authority of Mr. Doddington, the English envoy, and by that of two sagacious Sicilian priests, Platania and Caraccioli, then conversant with the state of the court. It must be added likewise, that there is nothing in this account which is not conformable to our notions of the sense and shrewdness of Alberoni. But, on the other hand, I must not conceal that the Marquess of San Phelipe, himself a statesman, and employed on a diplomatic mission at the time, is of opinion that the whole of this scene was a farce played by Alberoni, for the purpose of ridding himself of the responsibility of a war, to which

1717. he had previously excited his Sovereigns by every means in his power. That such an artifice is not only not repugnant, but even agreeable to the character of Alberoni, must be confessed; but I own that, upon the whole, I incline to the opinion, that he undertook the war more to please his sovereigns, than to gratify his own preconceived opinions.\*

From this time, we have to see Alberoni in a new character. Laying aside all his cautious policy, and somewhat of his diplomatic artifice, he endeavoured by the boldness of his enterprizes to astonish Europe, and by the extent and variety of his schemes to remedy the inherent weakness of the cause he had undertaken.

His first care, however, was to provide himself a defence in case of disgrace, or retirement. A short time before, he had obtained an order that the foreign correspondence, instead of being carried on through the secretaries of state, called the *Via de estado*, should pass directly to the King by what was called the *Via reservada*, or private channel. He thus obtained the sole management of foreign affairs. He now insisted upon his im-

\* See Alberoni's defence in the *Istoria del Cardinal' Alberoni*, and then compare San Phelipe and Coxe. Other writers have generally gone with the stream, and listened to no doubts.

mediate nomination as a cardinal. To give effect 1717.  
to his representations, he suspended a reconciliation already settled with the Pope, and prohibited the nuncio, who had arrived at Perpignan, from entering Spain; while at the same time he sent a messenger to Rome, with an intimation, that he expected the hat as the price of peace. The Pope, unable to resist this peremptory mode of asking a favour, and being assured that the Spanish armament was directed, not against the Emperor, but the Infidels, conferred on Alberoni the long expected honour. In proposing it to the consistory, he declared that he could not resist the instances of the King and Queen of Spain, who had displayed more solicitude for this promotion, than had ever before been shown, even for a prince of the blood. July, 1717.

The moment Alberoni saw this favourite wish of his ambition crowned with success; he determined on the sailing of the expedition, which was prepared in the ports of Barcelona; and despatched his friend and assistant, Don Joseph Patinio, with orders for this purpose. The expedition, which consisted of twelve ships of war and nine thousand troops, immediately put to sea. Expedition to Sardinia. August 2nd, 1717.

Even at this time, however, Alberoni acted with his usual dissimulation. To the envoy of England, he promised the redress of the griev-



1717. ances of the English merchants, and new securities for commerce.\* To the French ambassador, he observed, "It is the general opinion that Spain can do nothing of herself; yet her preparations alarm the world. What would have been the consequence if the King had followed my advice to remain quiet some years, and apply himself to the restoration of his finances?"† In the course of conversation, he insisted on the necessity of an union between the two Bourbon crowns, and offered to accept the mediation of France, provided the liberty of Italy and the pretensions of the Queen were secured. To sow distrust among the allies and increase the confidence of the Spaniards, he artfully spread reports that the object of the armament had been secretly communicated to the Regent.

The expedition now occupied the attention of Europe. While the Pope confidently believed it was destined to attack the Infidels, the Emperor, England, and France, waited with anxiety to see the result of preparations they had long viewed with jealousy and apprehension. Their doubts were soon determined, by the appearance of the first division of the expedition in the bay of Cagliari: the second was delayed by contrary winds

\* Doddington, Aug. 9.

† Noailles, Aug. 17.

for twenty days, which gave time for the governor to prepare for defence. Upon the arrival of their comrades, the Spaniards landed six thousand infantry and six hundred cavalry, to besiege the place. After a protracted defence, the Marquis of Rubi, the Austrian governor, abandoned the place, and the garrison surrendered; but two strong posts, Castel Aragones and Alguer remained to be subdued, and the governor directed the operations of the hardy mountaineers of the island against the invading army. In spite of their harassing warfare, and the autumnal diseases of the country, however, the whole island was reduced by the beginning of November, and the Marquis of Lede leaving five thousand men to maintain his conquest, returned with the sick and exhausted remainder of his army to Barcelona.

Great rejoicings took place in Spain upon the capture of Sardinia; *Te Deum* was performed, the capital illuminated, and the King displayed the highest satisfaction. Alberoni took advantage of the first success of the Spanish arms, to augment and strengthen his preparations for greater exploits. He increased some of the duties of customs, borrowed money upon anticipations of the revenue, and, in spite of the Pope, who inveighed bitterly against the King of Spain for

1717. deceiving him, continued to levy the ecclesiastical tax, which his Holiness had suspended. The Cardinal made no scruple even of imprisoning or banishing the priests who resisted the payment of the tax. He established founderies of artillery at Pampeluna, revived the armouries of Biscay, procured metal, ships, and naval stores, from Holland; and, with a skill similar to that of Lord Chatham, formed six regiments of the *miqueletes* of Catalonia, a mountainous people, celebrated as excellent marksmen, but hitherto justly considered as disaffected to the existing government. He likewise formed two regiments of the hunters of the Sierra Morena.

The Spanish people, roused to enthusiasm by a feat of arms, magnified as it was by the care of the government, vigorously seconded the activity of Alberoni. Not only were voluntary contributions of money offered to the government, but a new military force, amounting to sixteen regiments of infantry and eight of cavalry, was raised without any difficulty.

Illness of  
the King of  
Spain.

In the midst of these preparations, a sudden illness of the King threatened to put an end at once to his life, and the influence of the Queen and Alberoni. His attack was a return of his hypochondriac disorder, but of so violent a nature, that his confessor was summoned at mid-

night to administer extreme unction. In this state 1717.  
of affairs, reports of the most alarming nature  
were spread; the people were told that the Queen  
intended to poison the issue of Philip by his former  
wife; and the discontented nobles, roused  
into new activity, caballed both among themselves,  
and with the Regent of France. They even went  
so far as to sign a memorial to the Regent, proposing  
the deposition of Philip. "The King," they argued,  
"is either incapable of conducting his affairs, or else he is  
entirely under the control of Cardinal Alberoni: in the last  
case we must deliver him from bondage; in the first, we  
must place the monarchy in the hands of him who has  
a right to govern, when the King is incapable."\*  
The King's recovery, however, broke the neck of  
all these intrigues, and confirmed the government  
of the Queen and her minister.

A trifling circumstance, which happened during  
the illness of Philip, strongly marks the dislike  
and contempt entertained by the grandees of  
Spain for Alberoni. The Duke of Escalona,  
holding the place of Great Chamberlain, had a  
right, by virtue of that office, to be present at  
the consultation of physicians, and even to see the  
medicines administered. Finding the King en-

\* Noailles.

1717. tirely secluded by the Queen and Alberoni, he determined to put his privilege in force, and enter the royal apartment. In spite of a previous intimation from the Cardinal, and the resistance of the page in waiting, he burst open the door of the bed-chamber, where he found the Queen sitting at the head of the bed, the curtains drawn, and the Cardinal standing on one side. The Queen sent him a message to retire, but the old grandee, who was much crippled by the gout, still continued to advance, supporting himself on his cane. Alberoni then went himself to meet him, and told him the King desired to be alone. "That is not true," said the Duke; "I am not blind; you did not approach the head of the bed, nor did his Majesty speak to you." Alberoni then endeavoured gently to push him by the arm, at which the grandee burst into a violent rage, and spared neither reproaches nor blows. As he was old and feeble, however, he sunk into a chair; but still keeping hold of the Cardinal, he struck him about the head and shoulders with his cane, calling him a little contemptible varlet, and every other abusive name he could think of. The next day, this intemperate Lord Chamberlain was banished from Madrid, and was not recalled for some months; but what is strange to add, the King never heard

of any part of the affair, nor of the banishment of the Duke, till after the disgrace of Alberoni.\* 1717.

The Regent of France began now to be seriously apprehensive of war, and ordered 30 battalions and 50 squadrons to the Pyrenees, to be prepared for what might occur. Previously, however, to any further step, he sent the Marquis of Nancré to Madrid, to ascertain if any thing might still be done by pacific overtures. His instructions to his ambassadors were similar to those given upon the mission of Louville: Nancré was ordered to establish a close understanding with Alberoni, and to avoid all communication with the disaffected nobles, while St. Aignan, the regular ambassador, was desired to foment and extend, as far as possible, the connexions of the Regent with the malcontents. What the Regent intended by this double dealing is not very clear; and I have the strongest doubts whether such a political by-path, much as it has been admired and followed by those who think themselves professed statesmen, be half so safe as the open, broad, straight highway of honesty. At best, it is but a cunning expedient, in the hands of a weak prince, to ward off, for a time, the blows of superior force; and is utterly unworthy of the dignity

Mission of  
Nancré.

\* St. Simon.



1717. of a great nation. In this case certainly it was not successful. Alberoni, who, as an Italian, was at least equal to the native of any other country in intrigue, again turned the batteries of the Regent upon himself, and made a parade of his intimate correspondence with the French minister, to sow jealousy among the grandees, and in the bosom of the British ministers. He even spread a report that the Princess Orsini, and M. Orri, both odious to the Spaniards, were to be restored by the Regent's influence.

March 17,  
1718.  
Message of  
the King of  
England.

Very different was the conduct of the government of England. In a message to the House of Commons, the King declared that the negotiations in which he was engaged would be greatly promoted by an increase of his naval force, and expressed a hope that they would provide for an augmentation of the number of seamen. The Commons promised to comply with this request; a fleet was fitted out for the Mediterranean to maintain the peace of Italy, and its destination and purpose unreservedly imparted to Monteleon, the Spanish ambassador, whose angry remonstrance did not for a day delay its equipment. At the same time Colonel Stanhope was ordered to repair to Madrid, to be followed by Lord Stanhope himself. If the British ministers were right in opposing the Spanish projects, there can



be no doubt that this open display of force was 1718.  
the best means they could employ to effect their  
object.

Philip and his minister were equally mortified and provoked at this open opposition from a power they had taken so much pains to conciliate. Alberoni, playing his last stake, wrote to Mr. Doddington, who was now living as a private gentleman in London, to inform him, that a list of duties had been made out, but not finally signed, by which all the advantages promised to the English were withdrawn. At the same time he said he could not believe that the English nation would relinquish their commercial advantages, to concern themselves in the affairs of a Prince in whom they had no interest: he complained that the ministry of London had become German, and that in all the cabinets of Europe, "policy had given place to the caprice of a few individuals, who, without rhyme or reason, and perhaps for their own private interests, cut and pare states and kingdoms as if they were Dutch cheeses."

No longer relying on the acquiescence of England, the Cardinal now bent all his efforts to supply her place by more distant and less important alliances. He opened a communication with Ragotski, the exiled Prince of Transylvania, and offered him money sufficient to pay a force

Negotiations.

1718. of 30,000 Turks, which the Ottoman Porte had prepared to place under his command. By this means he hoped not only to secure a diversion in Transylvania against the Emperor, but to induce the Porte to continue the war in which he was engaged. But the Sultan listened rather to the advice of the ministers of England and Holland, who wished him to make peace with the Emperor; and the only effect of the Spanish mission was to scandalize the Christian world; for it was spread every where on the continent, that the King of Spain had entered into an alliance with the Turks against the Emperor, and the Imperial ambassador at Rome made a formal complaint on the subject to the Pope. Alberoni stoutly denied the fact; nor perhaps would the piety of Philip have permitted him to send a formal proposal to the Porte to enter into an offensive alliance against a Christian power.\* But at all events it was clear that the intention of Alberoni was to produce indirectly the same effect; and the Pope gave so much credit to his accusers, that after investing the

\* San Phelipe, indeed, says, he could not do so, as it is a maxim of the Spanish monarchy not to make peace with Infidels, and that the war had been carried on since Don Pelayo, that is for more than nine centuries, without intermission. Yet frequent truces had occurred in the course of this long war, and some precedents might have been found for the alliance now suspected.

Cardinal with the bishopric of Malaga, he refused 1718.  
to institute him into that of Seville, which fell  
vacant soon after; giving, as a pretext, that it was  
not usual to pass so soon from one bishopric to  
another. Alberoni, who had resigned the see of  
Malaga, was much provoked by this step; the  
Spanish ambassador remonstrated against it as  
contrary to the rights of the King of Spain; all  
Spanish subjects were ordered to leave Rome, and  
commerce was entirely suspended.\*

The Prince upon whose assistance Alberoni now  
chiefly relied was the Duke of Savoy, called at  
this time King of Sicily. The Abbé del Maro,  
the representative of the court of Turin, at  
Madrid, was authorized to offer his master twelve  
thousand infantry and three thousand cavalry, to-  
gether with a subsidy of a million of reals, to  
enable him to conquer the Duchy of Milan, on  
condition that he would yield Sicily into the hands  
of the King of Spain. † The Duke of Savoy he-  
sitated a moment; he knew that Sicily was lost  
to him, and he greatly coveted Milan; but upon  
striking the balance, he saw that the force of Spain  
was so inferior to the combined weight of England,  
France, and the Emperor, that he determined to  
reject the offer. With his usual dissimulation,  
however, he pretended to accept it, and even sent

\* San Phelipe, t. ii. 170.

† San Phelipe, t. ii. 173.

1718. an agent to Madrid, but the terms he asked were absurdly extravagant; and at the same moment he applied to the court of Vienna for the hand of one of the Archduchesses in marriage.

Intrigues  
in the  
North.

Thus baffled on every side to which he turned himself, Alberoni looked to the north, with the hope of raising an enemy to the Emperor among those distant powers. It so happened, that at this time both Peter the Great and Charles the Twelfth were highly provoked with the King of Great Britain, who had resisted the attempts of Russia to obtain a footing in the empire, and had accepted from the King of Denmark, Bremen and Verden, originally Swedish possessions, conquered by Denmark during the captivity of Charles. As the price of these cessions, a British fleet had appeared in the Baltic, and effectually protected Denmark against the attacks of Sweden. Charles the Twelfth was not a sovereign to bear patiently with such injuries. He caballed with the English Jacobites, and showed himself disposed to grant them assistance; but his intrigues were developed and defeated by the arrest of his ministers Goertz in England, and Gyllenborg in Holland. This vigorous step roused him to a pitch of fury, of which Alberoni took advantage, to make a reconciliation between Charles and Peter, and unite them both in a project for placing the Pretender on the

throne of England. In furtherance of his purpose, 1718. he sent the Duke of Ormond into Russia to negotiate a marriage between the son of the Chevalier, and Anne, the daughter of the Czar. This project did not take effect ; but the mediation of a Spanish agent produced a meeting of Russian and Swedish ministers in the isle of Aland, when preliminary articles of peace were signed. By the conditions there agreed upon, Charles was to yield to Russia the territory on the shores of the Baltic, and in return was to be assisted in the conquest of Norway, and the recovery of Bremen and Verden by the Russian arms. Finally, the united forces of both sovereigns were to join with those of Spain in restoring the exiled Stuarts to the throne of Great Britain.

In the mean time the Emperor was acting in complete concert with the government of England ; and the Pretender having contracted a marriage with the Princess Clementina Sobieski, the Imperial government, to the great scandal of the Catholic world, ordered the Princess to be stopped at Inspruck, upon her journey to meet her betrothed husband, and confined her in a convent.

The vigour of the Spanish preparations roused a corresponding energy in the councils of the allies. Ministers were named by the Emperor and the Venetians to negotiate a truce with the Turks: Mr.

1718. Sutton was sent by England to Passarowitz to mediate between the belligerent parties, and a strong Austrian force was transferred from Hungary to Lombardy. Stanhope and Dubois arranged the terms of a new treaty, to which the Emperor acceded, and which, from the accession of the Dutch, was afterwards called the Quadruple Alliance. By these terms the King of Spain was to restore Sardinia to the Emperor; Philip was to confirm the renunciation of the French succession, and the King of France of the Spanish: the Emperor was to acknowledge Philip as King of Spain; and Philip, in his turn, was to yield his right to the reversion of Sicily to the Emperor, to whom that island was to be immediately transferred; the Duke of Savoy was to receive Sardinia as a compensation for Sicily; the Emperor was to acknowledge the son of the Queen of Spain as successor to the states of Tuscany and Parma; but these were to remain feudal states, and a garrison of six thousand Swiss was to occupy the strong places of the two duchies. Finally, the term of three months was to be allowed for the accession of Philip and the Duke of Savoy; after which all the force of the contracting parties was to be used to extort their acquiescence.

Quadruple  
Alliance.  
August 3,  
1718.

Before the formal signature, which did not take place till August, these terms were communicated



to the court of Madrid. But Philip saw an insult 1718.  
to his dignity in this attempt to give the law to  
him without previous concert, and he was encour-  
aged to resistance by the Great Duke of Tuscany  
and the Duke of Parma, who, though both of them  
willing to make Don Carlos their heir, could not  
bear that the choice should be dictated by foreign  
powers. Animated by these feelings, Philip di-  
rected his minister to return a dry and haughty  
answer to the allies.

It must be confessed that the treaty of the Qua-  
druple Alliance shows, in the contracting powers,  
rather the consciousness of force than the sentiment  
of justice. The Duke of Savoy had received, by  
the treaty of Utrecht, the dominion of the island of  
Sicily ; to deprive him of it without adequate com-  
pensation, or with so slight an equivalent as Sar-  
dinia, was robbery and spoliation. Again ; the  
Duke of Tuscany enjoyed his sovereignty as ema-  
nating from the free republic of Florence : that  
foreign powers should name his successor and de-  
grade his state, on the pretext that Tuscany was  
a fief of the Empire, was a manifest violation of his  
rights. All that can be said in excuse for this  
treaty is, that the territories to which it referred,  
if not apportioned by treaty, would become the  
object of a war, and that peace being necessary to  
Europe, it was better to come at once to the con-



1718. clusion, even though the injustice might thereby become more glaring, than to involve the whole world afresh in a bloody and ruinous contest.

In the mean time Alberoni had despatched from the port of Barcelona the great expedition intended for the conquest of Sicily. It consisted of twenty-two ships of the line, three merchant ships armed as men of war, four gallies, and three hundred and forty transports. On board of these were embarked thirty thousand infantry and cavalry, provided with one hundred pieces of heavy cannon for sieges, forty mortars, upwards of two thousand artillerymen, sappers, and engineers, and one thousand five hundred artillery mules. Never was an army better provided both with warlike stores and provisions. The fleet was commanded by Don Antonio Gastanieta, a good seaman, but an untried officer; the army by the Marquis of Lede. The flower of the troops who had served in the Succession war were employed on this expedition. Don Joseph Patinio embarked on board the fleet, with full powers from the Cardinal to direct the expedition in case of discord between the two chiefs, who were ordered to do nothing without his consent.

June 18,  
1718.

About the same time Earl Stanhope repaired to Madrid, to try one more effort at conciliation. Alberoni sent him a passport, which he had

desired, but told the French minister, that his master would rather consent to eternal war, than the propositions of the Quadruple Alliance. ‘Should Stanhope attempt to give the law here,” he said, “he will be ill received.”

Before Lord Stanhope reached Madrid, Admiral Byng, with a fleet of twenty sail of the line, arrived off Cape St. Vincent. He despatched a messenger to Colonel Stanhope, who had preceded his brother at Madrid, to acquaint him that he was instructed to promote all measures for composing the differences between the King of Spain and the Emperor; but that should his Catholic Majesty not accept the mediation of the King of England, and persist in attacking the territories of the Emperor in Italy, in that case he was ordered to maintain the neutrality of Italy, and oppose force to force.

Colonel Stanhope immediately communicated this letter to the Cardinal. Indignant at the menace, Alberoni warmly replied, “My master will encounter all perils, and rather be driven from Spain than recall his troops, or consent to a suspension of arms. The Spaniards are not to be frightened; and I am so confident of the courage of our fleet, that if your Admiral should think proper to attack it, I shall be in no pain for the result.” To this angry speech Stanhope made no other answer than by presenting the Cardinal with

1713. a list of the British fleet. Upon which Alberoni, still more provoked by the coolness, than the menace of the English minister, snatched the list, tore it to pieces, and trampled it under foot. The only word he could be brought to say was, that an answer should be given in two days. With his usual art he delayed this answer for nine days, and then sent a short note, saying, that the Chevalier Byng might execute the orders he had received from the King his master.\*

Arrival of  
the Spaniards in  
Sicily.

In the mean time the Spanish fleet had reached the coast of Sicily, where the inhabitants were anxiously awaiting their arrival. The ancient government of Spain, tyrannically severe in repressing religious or political freedom, had been, when the desire of those benefits was completely extinct, an easy and indulgent despotism; the undue exercise of authority on some subjects had been counterbalanced by a lax administration of law upon all others. In her distant possessions, especially, the arm of the executive (feeble even at home) was scarcely felt; the rich, enjoying an impunity of vice, and the people, paying very moderate contributions to the mother country, were alike satisfied and grateful. This fact, if it speaks more for

\* “His Catholic Majesty has done me the honour to tell me, that the Chevalier Byng may execute the orders he has received from the King his master.” signed, Alberoni.

the weakness than for the kindness of the govern- 1718.  
ment of Madrid, yet implies good-nature and dis-  
interested integrity in the Spanish governors. For  
the same neglect which permitted the Sicilians to  
live unwatched, and unvexed by the royal autho-  
rity, would have allowed the Viceroy to exercise  
the tyranny for which a proconsular authority is  
proverbial.

The Duke of Savoy had commenced his admini-  
stration in a very different manner. A careful  
and exact demand of all his rights, provoked a  
nation accustomed to licence; and they called that  
severity tyranny, which in fact was justice.\*

Hence, the Spanish army was received with ge- July 1st.  
neral joy by the people of Sicily. The troops dis-  
embarked on the 1st of July within four leagues  
of Palermo, which the governor abandoned, leaving  
1500 men in the castle. After thirteen days of  
open trenches the castle likewise surrendered. In  
the rest of Sicily the success of the Spanish arms  
was still more easy. The people of Catania rose  
and made themselves masters of their city for the  
Spaniards; Syracuse was taken possession of by a  
detachment of the fleet; Termini was captured  
after a few days' siege; the people of Messina rose  
against their governor and obliged the garrison, of  
two thousand five hundred Piedmontese, to take

\* San Phelipe, t. ii. 179.

1718. refuge in the citadel. The Spaniards immediately repaired there, and quickly made themselves masters of some outworks of the enemy.

Such was the state of affairs when Admiral Byng arrived in the Bay of Naples. His first step was to send an officer to the Marquess of Lede, informing him of his orders, and proposing a suspension of arms. This offer was rejected; but the Spanish admiral, uncertain what to do, lost three days in hesitation, and asking advice of Patinio. Thus it generally happens, that two joint commanders of an expedition bandy responsibility from one to the other, till the opportunity for successful action is completely lost. On the

August 9th.

9th of August, Admiral Byng made the Torre del Faro; and finding that the Spanish admiral had left Messina the day before, in order to get through the narrow strait, he immediately sent back some German troops, which he had undertaken to convoy from Reggio to Messina, and made sail after the Spaniards. The Spanish fleet in the mean time retired towards Spartivento without making a press of sail; much to the advantage of their dignity, but greatly to the hazard of their safety. On the 11th in the morn-

Victory of  
Admiral  
Byng.  
Aug. 11th.

ing, at daylight, the two fleets were mingled together, and the rear guard of the Spaniards found itself near the land, at some distance from the

main body. Admiral Byng immediately crowded 1718.  
sail with the view of cutting off this squadron,  
against which he detached Captain Walton, with  
seven sail of the line. The Marquess Mari, a  
Genoese, who commanded the division, seeing  
himself cut off, ran his ships on shore, where  
some of them were burnt by the Spaniards, others  
taken by the English. Admiral Byng with the  
rest of the fleet pursued the main body of the  
enemy, and coming up with them about two  
o'clock, a close engagement commenced. The  
Spanish ships, without order or direction from  
their commander, were attacked singly by the  
English; and after an obstinate defence, the whole  
fleet, with the exception of four ships of the line  
and six frigates, which made good their retreat to  
Malta, was either captured or burnt.

According to the account sent home by Admiral Byng, of the twenty-one ships of which the English fleet was composed, not one was taken or destroyed, while the Spaniards lost twenty-three men of war, besides other vessels, with five thousand three hundred and ninety men, and seven hundred and twenty-eight pieces of cannon. The letter of Captain Walton, announcing that he had taken four ships of war, and burnt four ships of the line, is a curious example of brevity; it runs thus:

1718. "Sir, We have taken and destroyed all the Spanish ships and vessels which were upon the coast, the number as per margin. I am, &c. G. Walton."

The defeat which the Spaniards sustained upon this occasion, is to be attributed not to any want of courage or discipline, for the crews of each ship fought with desperation, but to the hesitating councils of their commanders, the superior naval skill of the English, and the bad condition of the Spanish men of war, which were chiefly merchant vessels, and unfit to carry the weight of metal with which they were laden. In true policy, the Spanish commanders ought to have sent away their fleet as soon as the army was disembarked, or at all events to have retired to Malta as soon as the English appeared at Naples. Spanish writers allege, indeed, that the English admiral did not clearly intimate to the Spanish, that he was ordered to commence hostilities. The English on the other hand affirm, that the Admiral's own captain was charged to inform the Marquess of Lede, that should his proposal of an armistice be rejected, he would, in pursuance of his directions, use all his force to prevent further attempts to disturb the dominions his master had engaged to defend. Be this as it may, it is clear that the Spanish admiral ought to have foreseen the probability of hostilities; that he ought to have done



every thing in his power to have avoided the 1718.  
 chance of an attack ; and that, at all events, he  
 should not have exposed himself to be destroyed  
 in a running fight, in which skill and experience  
 were so greatly on the side of the English.\*

Notwithstanding this naval victory, the Spanish  
 general carried on the siege of the citadel of Mes-  
 sina with such vigour, that the governor surren-  
 dered the place by capitulation on the 29th of  
 September. Admiral Byng, after putting into  
 Syracuse for a short time, continued cruizing  
 during the winter, or at least for the greater part  
 of it, in order to prevent the Spaniards from re-  
 ceiving supplies, a service in which he was only  
 partly successful. After this, he returned to Ma-  
 hon to refit for the spring.

When Lord Stanhope arrived at Madrid, he  
 was at first favourably received by Alberoni, but  
 after a short delay the Cardinal declared, in an-  
 swer to a threat of hostility from France, that his  
 sovereign would never lay down his arms till Sar-  
 dinia and Sicily were ceded to Spain, and until  
 the Emperor, besides indemnifying the Duke of  
 Savoy for the loss of Sicily, had engaged to main-  
 tain only a limited number of troops in Italy.†

Lord Stan-  
 hope at  
 Madrid.

These terms form so extravagant a demand on  
 the part of Spain, now threatened with hostility

\* San Phelipe, t. ii. Hist. Register.

† Coxe.

1718. by all Europe, that it seems difficult to believe Alberoni can have been blind to the consequences of so much passion and presumption. It is not surprising, therefore, to find Lord Stanhope representing, that he believes him extremely desirous to accommodate matters. "He complains bitterly," adds Lord Stanhope, "of the King's obstinacy, who is at present more governed by his personal animosity against the Emperor and the Regent, than by any reasons of state. He represents him, besides, as exceedingly jealous and mistrustful of all about him, insomuch that, for a considerable time, no person has ever spoke to the King and Queen asunder; nor does any other minister ever dare to speak but in the presence of the King, Queen, and Cardinal, who, by what I can judge, are every one jealous of each other. The Cardinal shed tears when I parted with him; has promised to write to me, and to let slip no occasion which may offer of adjusting matters."\*

Spanish  
victory in  
Sicily.

The Spaniards continued to have some success in Sicily. In the month of October they besieged Melazzo: the Germans, who had eight thousand men in the place, attacked them when only six thousand of their troops had arrived, but after a severe action were driven back with a loss, according to the Spanish accounts, of three thousand

\* Coxe, vol. ii. 8vo.

killed and wounded, and a thousand prisoners; 1718. among the latter was the Count Vetterani.\* Other accounts indeed make the loss of the Germans much less. This victory added greatly to the confidence of the Spaniards.

But while the valour of the Spaniards shone with a lustre, of which there have been few examples since the bright period of the monarchy, the rashness of their councils, and the unsubstantial texture of their alliances, were becoming every day more apparent. Victor Amadeus, who had for some time coquetted with Alberoni, now denounced the King of Spain as a violator of the treaty of Utrecht, agreed to the terms of the Quadruple Alliance, and in the month of November was acknowledged at Vienna as King of Sardinia. At the same time the Emperor sent such numerous reinforcements into Sicily, that the Spaniards were unable even to acquire the place of Melazzo, the scene of their recent victory. In the north, all their hopes were blasted in a single moment. In the beginning of December the King of Sweden was killed before the fortress of Frederickshal, in Norway: it is uncertain whether by the hand of an enemy or a traitor. With him vanished all the hopes which had been formed of the co-operation of the northern powers: Sweden changed at once

Death of  
Charles the  
Twelfth.

\* San Phelipe. Historical Register, p. 718.

- 1713 her internal despotism and foreign war, for a constitution at home and peace abroad ; while Russia was awed into neutrality by the appearance of a British fleet in the Baltic.

Conspiracy  
in France.

Among the favourite plans of Alberoni, one, from which he cherished the greatest hopes of success, was a plot for depriving the Duke of Orleans of the Regency of France, and transferring his power to the King of Spain. The persons most attached to the memory of Lewis the Fourteenth were united in a cabal against a government which opposed his grandson in concert with England ; and so strong was the feeling of the court, that Marshal d'Uxelles, minister for foreign affairs, declared he would sooner lose his right hand than sign the treaty of the Quadruple Alliance. It soon appeared, indeed, that far from being willing to lose his right hand, he was not prepared to lose even his place, for he signed the treaty he had denounced ; but others were not so prudent. Even St. Simon, the truest of the Regent's friends, said to him, " If the King of Spain should enter France unarmed, and throwing himself on the nation demand the Regency in his own right, I confess that, however attached to you, I should take my leave of you with tears, and acknowledge him as Regent. If I, devoted as I am to you, thus think and feel,

what can you expect from the French in general? 1718.\*

Upon this foundation was built a conspiracy, at the head of which was placed the Duke, or rather the Duchess of Maine. Of the particulars of this plot some account shall be given in another place; at present, it is sufficient to say that it was defeated, partly by the imprudence of the leaders, and partly by the active police of Dubois. Few punishments were inflicted, and all danger to the Regent's government was completely dispelled.

The discovery of this plot produced an open rupture between France and Spain. The King of Spain, in a public manifesto, denounced the usurped authority of the Regent, and appealing to the feelings of the French nation, called upon them to acknowledge him as the lawful representative of Majesty, during the minority of his nephew. The Regent replied by a public declaration of war, accompanied by a manifesto, complaining that Spain had broken the neutrality of Italy, in contravention of her former engagements, and had endeavoured to disturb France by secret conspiracies. The King of Spain soon published an answer, full of complaints of all the allies, but especially of England; and as the Regent had directed his manifesto

French Declaration  
of War  
against  
Spain.

\* St. Simon, t. vii. p. 148.

1719. more against Alberoni than the King, the Spanish memorials, on the other hand, drew the most offensive comparison between Alberoni and the Regent, which it is supposed was never forgiven by the latter.

Although the Regent had not hesitated to declare war, the commencement of hostilities was a moment of anxiety and embarrassment for the French government. Marshal Villars, the most celebrated and popular commander in the service, not only refused to accept a command against the King of Spain, but made an appeal to the Regent and his council, earnestly recommending a reconciliation between two sovereigns so nearly connected by blood and interest. In the frontier provinces large numbers of mal-contented were ready to join the standard of Philip; the army itself was tainted with disaffection, and an indefinite longing for change. To second the good-will of his adherents, the King of Spain quitted Madrid at the beginning of the spring, and on placing himself at the head of his troops published a declaration to the French nation and army on whose behalf he declared himself to have taken up arms. In this appeal he called upon the French soldiery to repair to his standard, and exhorted them to throw off "an obedience forcibly extorted *by the pretended Regent,*" while he promised them, in return, the

favour of the King when he should come of age, 1719. and those honours and rewards which they would justly be entitled to expect. This appeal was answered by the Regent in a letter to the Duke of Berwick. The Regent, however, gave a far better answer to Philip than could be conveyed in words; he was aware, that for certain maladies of the mind there is no cure so good as occupation, and that to a discontented French army, in particular, no satisfaction can be offered so acceptable as to lead them into the presence of an enemy. Marshal Berwick, a general of the highest reputation, was placed at the head of a body of thirty thousand men, and directed to march into Spain. The Duke of Berwick has been unjustly blamed for accepting a command which obliged him to serve against his benefactor. In his office of governor for the King, in the province of Guienne, the example of disobedience to orders, would have been no less than treason against the government by which he was employed; besides, when fairly considered, the King of Spain had more obligations to him, than he to the King of Spain; he had gained a great battle, and preserved a large territory for Philip, and had received, in return, the title of grandee and the order of the golden fleece; the balance at least is surely not against him. It is even said that, on commencing this campaign, he sent back

Marshal  
Berwick  
commands  
the French  
Army.



1719. the golden fleece to the King of Spain, who however refused to receive it.\*

The plan of operations of Marshal Berwick was to extend a force along the Pyrenees sufficient to preserve the frontier from hostile incursion, and at the same time to make a strong impression on Spain itself. For this purpose he proposed to undertake the siege of Pamplona; but as the materials could not be prepared in time, the sieges of Fuenterrabia and St. Sebastian were resolved upon instead. Previously to his arrival, however, the French army crossed the Bidassoa, and took Passages, where they burnt six ships of war, which they found upon the stocks. When Berwick joined the army, he commenced the siege of Fuenterrabia in form, and three weeks after opening the trenches, two breaches being made, and a lodgement established, the enemy surrendered. On the day before the surrender of the place, the King of Spain advanced with his army to Lesaca, within two leagues of Irun, but finding that the town was taken, he retired on the following day. Philip was greatly mortified at this result. He had meditated an attack upon the French at the head of his own army, which did not amount to half the number of his opponents, and had only been prevented by the entreaties and remonstrances

Takes Fuenterrabia.  
June 18th,  
1719.

\* San Phelipe.

of Alberoni. “Hitlierto,” said the Cardinal, “I 1719.  
have passed for the author of the war, and the disturber of the peace of Europe. I have drawn on myself the odium of the whole world, and it was a sacrifice to which I cheerfully submitted, and shall submit; but I cannot see your Majesty, at the head of a handful of men, attempt to succour Fuenterrabia, besieged by a more powerful army, advantageously posted. This is to encounter certain ruin; to expose yourself to a most dreadful catastrophe. As I am blamed for every thing, it would give colour to the general accusation, and it would be said, that no better result could have been expected from the counsels of a madman.”\*

So angry was Philip at being thwarted in his schemes, that had it not been for the Queen, he would have immediately disgraced Alberoni; nay, so confident was he of the attachment of the French army, that had not an artifice of the Cardinal delayed the execution of an order, he would have marched with a small escort, and thrown himself unprotected into the midst of the French troops. Perhaps, however, in so desperate a war, such chivalry would have been less imprudent than the more sober extravagance of his minister.

After the siege of Fuenterrabia, Berwick pursued his designs against St. Sebastian. He placed

Capture of  
St. Sebastian.

\* *Istoria del Cardinal' Alberoni*, P. ii. p. 117.

1719. his batteries along the river Gurumea ; but as he was not able to approach nearer than one hundred and eighty toises from the place, the breach was not practicable till the 1st of August, when the governor capitulated. Berwick obliged the garrison to retire into the citadel, where he bombarded them with shells, with such success, that they surrendered on the 19th, and received the honours of war.

August,  
1719.

Before the fall of St. Sebastian, seven hundred French troops had been embarked on board an English squadron, and sent to Santonia, where they destroyed all the magazines, and burnt seven unfinished ships upon the stocks. Colonel Stanhope was present at this operation, which many of the French considered as a sacrifice of French policy to the interests of England, who, they said, had no other object in the war than to destroy the naval power, and supplant the commerce of Spain.\*

As it was not consistent with the maxims of war in these times for an army to advance, leaving behind it so strong a fortress as Pamplona, Marshal Berwick, after the capture of St. Sebastian, withdrew across the Pyrenees, and directed his march towards Catalonia. Philip left his army, and returned in bitter disappointment to Madrid. To

\* San Phelipe. Duclos.

increase his mortification, the states of Guipuzcoa 1719. desired the protection of France, and requested of the Duke of Berwick that, in any treaty of peace, England and France would provide for the maintenance of their privileges and liberties. Their overture was rejected, however, by the Duke of Orleans, as inconsistent with the declared objects of the war.

In Catalonia, the French soon made themselves masters of Urgel, and advanced to the siege of Roses. But the extreme badness of the weather, and a tempest which destroyed a great number of their vessels laden with stores and provisions, obliged them to abandon the enterprize, and Marshal Berwick, after placing his troops in winter quarters, returned to Paris.

Fall of Urgel, August 31.

If Alberoni was unsuccessful in his attempts to overturn the government of France, he was no less disappointed in his endeavours to shake the establishment of the House of Hanover in England. The Pope, either weary of the presence of the Pretender, or really anxious to obtain a triumph of the Catholic cause, insinuated to the King of Spain, through D'Aubenton, his confessor, that the presence of the exiled prince in Madrid would give new hopes to his adherents. Alberoni eagerly listened to these insinuations, and the Duke of

1719. Ormond, repairing to Madrid, was instructed to confer with the Cardinal on the means of making a successful invasion of Great Britain. When the Dutch took alarm at his appearance in Madrid, as likely to endanger the Protestant establishment, which they had guaranteed, Alberoni assured them that the Duke of Ormond had merely sought refuge in Spain for the sake of personal security. In the mean time he hastened warlike preparations in the ports of Galicia and at Cadiz, under the pretence of sending reinforcements to Sicily. The Chevalier himself quitted Urbino by stealth, and embarking at Netteno, landed at Cagliari in March. From thence he took his passage to Roses, in Catalonia, and proceeded to Madrid, where he was received with great cordiality, and treated as King of Great Britain. A long list was presented to Alberoni of persons of note in the three kingdoms, who were ready to join his standard as soon as he should land.\* On the 10th of March a fleet, consisting of three men of war and twenty-one transports, sailed from Cadiz, having on board five thousand men, a great quantity of ammunition, and thirty thousand muskets; they were directed to join the rest of the expedition at Corunna, and to invade at once the kingdoms of England and Ireland.

Expedition  
against  
England.  
March 10,  
1719.

\* San Phelipe.

The allied cabinets were not slow in taking 1719.  
measures to defeat this expedition. The King of  
England offered, by proclamation, a reward of ten  
thousand pounds to any one who should apprehend the Duke of Ormond. Troops were ordered  
to assemble in the north and the west of England,  
while a strong squadron, under Admiral Norris,  
was equipped and sent to sea to meet the Spanish  
fleet. At the sametime the Duke of Orleans ordered ships to be prepared at Brest to join the  
English squadron, and offered twenty battalions to  
serve against the Pretender by land. The Dutch,  
according to treaty, furnished two thousand men,  
and six battalions of Imperialists were sent from  
the Austrian Netherlands. These extensive preparations were much more than sufficient for the  
purpose. The Spanish fleet, under the Duke of  
Ormond, was dispersed and disabled by a great Dispersed.  
storm off Cape Finisterre, which lasted twelve  
days. Two ships only arrived in Scotland, with  
the Earls of Mareschal and Seaforth, the Marquess  
of Tullibardine, three hundred Spaniards, and  
arms for two thousand men. After a fruitless  
attempt to defend the passes of the mountains, by  
the aid of a small body of Highlanders who joined  
them, the Spaniards surrendered, and the rebel  
chiefs retired to the Western Isles, from whence  
they escaped to the Continent.

1719.  
The Span-  
iards lose  
Sicily.

The arms of Spain were no less unfortunate in Sicily. After various battles, in which the Spaniards in vain displayed the utmost valour and constancy, against an enemy always increasing in number, the Imperialists laid siege to Messina; the Marquess of Lede so long hesitated whether he should march to its relief, that, at length, the place yielded before he arrived. The court of Vienna received this news with the utmost joy, and it is said that, flushed with the fulness of their success in Sicily, they proposed to their allies to diminish the equivalent offered to Spain by the treaty of London; but if so, the courts of France and England, anxious for a speedy peace, rejected the proposal.

To complete the misfortunes of Spain, Holland had at length renounced her neutrality. For a long time the advantages of the rich commerce between Spain and her American colonies, carried on under the neutral flag, had deterred the Dutch from taking any part in the war. Beretti Landi, the Spanish minister at the Hague, was so pleased with this neutrality, that he caused a medal to be struck, representing the heralds of England, France, and Austria, sitting in a car with only three wheels, and holding out their hands to Holland, who stood on one side refusing to them the fourth: the legend was ‘*Sistit adhuc, quartâ de-*



*ficiente rotâ.* At length, however, the pressing instances of France and England overcame the interested reluctance of the Dutch, and they acceded to the alliance. Three months, however, were allowed by Holland, to enable Spain to accept the proffered conditions; and Alberoni took advantage of this overture to propose terms of peace. The conditions offered by him were, Sicily for the Emperor, with the right of reversion to Spain; the succession of Tuscany and Parma for Don Carlos; commerce to be placed on the footing established by the treaty of Utrecht; Gibraltar and Minorca to be yielded by England. These terms were evidently ill-suited to the low condition of Spain; and the allies on their side, were preparing the way for peace in a very different manner.

Accession  
of the  
Dutch to  
the Quad-  
ruple Al-  
liance,  
Feb. 16,  
1719.

For this purpose Lord Stanhope wrote to the Cardinal Dubois, to express his opinion, that they would act wrong if they did not consolidate the peace by the removal of the minister who had kindled the war. That it was not to be imagined he would ever lose sight of his vast designs; and if compelled to accept peace, it would be with a resolution to seize the first opportunity of vengeance, whenever the recovery of his strength, and the remissness of other powers, should give him hopes of better success. That he was versed in all negotiations, and would take advantage of past

Dispatch of  
Earl Stan-  
hope to  
Dubois.  
August 22,  
1719.

1719. experience to improve his connexions and form them with more caution. “When he is reduced,” added Lord Stanhope, “let us not suffer him to recover. Let us exact from Philip his dismissal from Spain. Let us hold forth this example to Europe, as a means of intimidating every turbulent minister, who breaks the most solemn treaties, and attacks the persons of princes in the most scandalous manner.”

The proposal contained in this dispatch is almost without an example in the history of Europe. To make the dismissal of a minister, by an independent sovereign, a condition of peace, seems at first sight an open violation of the rights of states to govern themselves. As an individual, however, has an undoubted right to the management of his own property, but no right to set up a nuisance to annoy his neighbours, so no country has a right to use its independent authority in such a manner as to threaten the security of surrounding states. Nor can it be denied that Alberoni, by exciting civil war in England and France, had fairly raised the question in the minds of statesmen, whether his elevation was compatible with the tranquillity of those countries. As to the policy of their conduct, it appears to me that England was animated by a just view of national interest, but that France was stimulated by the

personal vengeance of the Regent. We have seen 1719.  
that the style of the Spanish memorials was extremely offensive to that prince ; but there was an older and a juster cause for his resentment. Early in the public career of the Cardinal, the Regent had written a private letter to Philip against him, which for security he had sent to D'Aubenton. But that which was intended to make the effect of his measure certain, was the circumstance which made it fail ; for D'Aubenton, thinking Alberoni too well fixed to be shaken, carried him the letter of the Regent. Alberoni, listening to passion rather than reason, wrote in revenge a letter to a friend at Paris, in which, after declaring his respect for the Regent, he said it grieved him to hear the Dutch and English say that he aspired to the crown, and that when his means were prepared, " the person of the King would give him no trouble." This letter he desired might be shown to the Regent, who probably cherished a bitter hatred in return. Whatever we may think of the motives, however, the proposal of Stanhope is a high testimony to the genius and resources of Alberoni.

The downfall of the Cardinal being resolved upon by the allies, the execution of the project, instead of being made a point of public negotiation, was brought about by secret intrigue. The

Intrigues  
at Madrid.

1719. Regent applied to D'Aubenton, the confessor, with better success than before, as Alberoni had at this time offended him, by an unsuccessful attempt to put another person in his place. His representations were seconded by Platania and Caraccioli, the two Sicilian priests before mentioned, and by Ripperda, who was shortly to play so distinguished a part on the theatre of Spanish politics. The intrigues of these artful politicians were aided by the insinuations of a person of less ostensible, but more dangerous importance. Laura Pescatori, who had been the nurse of the Queen, now filled the situation of *assafeta*, or first woman of the bed-chamber, a place which, in Spain, was accompanied with the influence consequent to the retirement in which the Queens of Spain were always kept. Alberoni, dreading the long-lived affections of childhood and of country, had done all in his power to prevent the arrival at Madrid of any of the natives of Parma. Laura quickly perceiving his jealousy through the veil of his politeness, openly declared herself his enemy, took advantage of her condition and favour to load the Cardinal with every kind of coarse raillery, and always spoke of him to the Queen in terms of antipathy and contempt.\* Her zeal was quick-

\* St. Simon. Duclos.

ened and her invective sharpened by liberal pro- 1719.  
mises of money from Dubois.

The disasters of the Spanish arms prepared the mind of the Queen to listen with complacency to these perpetual attacks. Thus, while the Cardinal removed from the King's presence every person of consideration who might be hostile to him, and even, in contravention of established forms, prevented the secretaries of state from approaching him, an obscure female peasant of an Italian village was secretly undermining all his measures, and preparing the way for the pacification of Europe.

While the French agency was thus employed, the British court was not idle. Lord Peterborough, who happened to be at Paris, undertook a journey to Italy under the pretence of amusement, but in reality for the purpose of gaining the Duke of Parma, the father of the Queen of Spain. This he found an easy task: the enmity of the Emperor was dangerous, and the behaviour of Alberoni, since his elevation, had not been satisfactory to his former master. The Marquess Scotti, who had formerly been employed by Alberoni, was now sent as the envoy of Parma to Madrid, and fifty thousand crowns were furnished him by the allies, as a reward for the services he was expected to perform. No sooner had he

1719. arrived at Madrid than, by means of Laura Pescatori, he obtained a private audience of the Queen. In this interview he declaimed against the mischievous policy of Alberoni; and assured the Queen, that if she would contribute towards his dismissal, he was authorized by the English and French governments to assure her of a more certain and substantial aggrandizement for herself and her family, than she could expect even from the success of his projects. Finally, he placed in her hands letters and papers from the Regent and the Duke of Parma, confirming all that he had said.\*

Dismissal  
of Alberoni.  
Dec. 4th,  
1719.

It is affirmed that Alberoni, foreseeing the approaching storm, would now willingly have retired, had he known where to find a secure retreat. Be that as it may, the King, completely won by the promises and the papers of Scotti, finally determined to dismiss his minister. On the evening of the 4th of December he transacted business with the Cardinal for the last time, but without letting drop a hint of his intentions. On the following morning he set out for the Pardo, leaving a decree, written in his own hand, to the following effect; “that in order to remove all obstacles to a solid and durable peace, he had determined to remove from the management of af-

\* Coxe. San Phelipe.

fairs the Cardinal Alberoni, and for this purpose 1719. ordered him to leave Madrid in eight days, and the kingdom of Spain in three weeks." The Cardinal, after a vain attempt to obtain an audience, wrote a letter to the King, asking for some mitigation in his fate. Whether the King read this letter is uncertain ; the only answer the fallen minister received was an order to obey the royal decree.

Before Alberoni left Madrid, and as soon as his disgrace was known, the nobles, gentry, and clergy, crowded to attend his last levee in numbers, such as he had never witnessed even in the height of power. This demonstration has been attributed by his friends to esteem and admiration; by his enemies, to curiosity and compassion. If we may form a conjecture, it is probable that the greater part of those who paid their respects to him when fallen from power, would have been sorry to see him re-established, but that they wished to show their esteem for a minister who, in spite of the extravagance of his projects and the arrogance of his manners, had undoubtedly raised the character of Spain in Europe, and, in the gratification of his private ambition, had flattered that pride of national glory of which no people are more susceptible than the Spaniards.

Alberoni left Madrid on the 12th of December, Dec. 12.



1720. taking the road to Barcelona. At Lerida he was overtaken by an officer commissioned to search for papers. It has been said, that the will of Charles the second was among the papers missing and recovered; but no good authority can be quoted for this report. In the course of the search, Alberoni took up a bill of exchange for twenty-five thousand doubloons, and tore it to pieces in the presence of the officer. In his passage through Catalonia, he was attacked by a party of *miquelets*, who killed a servant and a soldier of his escort, while he himself escaped to Gerona on foot, and in disguise. As soon as he arrived in France, the Chevalier de Massieu was ordered to join him under the pretext of civility, but in fact to draw from him his secrets. The Cardinal easily penetrated the intention, and told Massieu that he knew his object: he did not however put himself under any restraint on the subject of the King and Queen, whom he bitterly reproached with their ingratitude. “If the Queen,” he said, “should find a good general, she will disturb all Europe; she can easily govern her husband, who, after he has said in a low voice, ‘I choose to be master,’ always ends by obeying, and requires nothing but a wife and a prayer-book.” Alberoni added, that far from having excited the war, he had always opposed it; that the Duke of Maine

had not joined in the conspiracy of Cellamare, 1720. but that the Duchess was a wicked devil; and that the greater part of her partisans, whom he would never name, were not worth half a crown. The ministry, which he left in Spain, he represented as composed of ignorant men, who would be forced to pay deference to the favourites of their weak King. He suspected that they desired to have him assassinated by the *miquelets*, in making him pass through Catalonia, whose rebellion he had punished, instead of by Pamplona, as he had requested.\*

On the first of February he embarked at Antibes with the intention of going to Rome, but at Sestri he received an intimation that he would not be permitted to enter the ecclesiastical territory, or be allowed to receive the inauguration of his See of Malaga. From Sestri he wrote four letters con-

\* Duclos. San Phelipe. St. Simon. Three errors are committed by Coxe in his account of these transactions. 1st. He says, that St. Phelipe doubts the fact of the will of Charles II. being found among the papers of the Cardinal, whereas he never mentions it. 2nd. He makes Alberoni tear a bill for twenty-five thousand dollars, instead of doubloons, which are sixteen times as much. 3rd. He attributes to Duclos and St. Simon an assertion, that Alberoni offered to disclose to the Regent his connexions with the disaffected, whereas Duclos asserts precisely the contrary.

1720. taining a laboured apology of his whole conduct of the administration of Spain, which have furnished materials for the foregoing narrative.

While such was the progress of Alberoni, the King and Queen of Spain pursued him with a bitterness and animosity fully equal to their former partiality. To the allied powers, they declared that the whole blame of the war was to be attributed to his turbulent spirit. In the second audience which they granted to the British ambassador, they protested that Alberoni had always deceived them; that he had shown them forged letters for the purpose of ruining those whom he suspected; that his suspicions usually fell upon persons of character; and that there was no crime of which he was not capable, even of poisoning and assassination. They therefore entreated the King of England to employ his interest with the Regent and the Emperor, for the purpose of prevailing on the Pope to deprive him of the purple, and retain him in perpetual confinement.\* In the mean time Philip transmitted his accusations to Rome, and the Pope through Cardinal Imperiali, applied to the senate of Genoa for his detention. The charges, which Philip was not ashamed to bring against his late minister, were, 1st. That he employed the money which he derived from the

\* Coxe, *Memoirs of Spain*. Hardwicke papers.

crusades and other ecclesiastical taxes, in making 1720. war against catholic princes. 2nd. That he undertook a war against the Emperor, at the moment when engaged in a contest with the Turks, to the great detriment of Italy and Europe. 3rd. That for his own private interests, he had prohibited the subjects of Spain from soliciting bulls for the benefices conferred by the Pope. \*

Alberoni, finding no safety from his persecutors, went across the bay to Spezzia, directed his course through the Apennines disguised as a merchant, and on the fourth day of his journey disappeared. Switzerland, which in all *past* times honourably distinguished itself by giving refuge to foreigners persecuted by their political opponents, was the country to which he retreated. He at first repaired to Lucarno; and such was the hospitality observed towards him, that some attempts having been made to arrest him, he was transferred by the Regency of Coire to a pleasant castle in the Alps, and the strictest orders given to watch against a surprise.

A year after this, upon the death of Clement the Eleventh, Alberoni re-appeared at Rome: on this occasion a prodigious concourse awaited his arrival, and accompanied him to his house with continued acclamation and applause. The papal tri-

\* Coxe, Mem. of the Kings of Spain.

1720. bunal, however, condemned him to retire into a convent for three years, which were shortened to one by the Pope. In 1725, he was in such favour at Rome, that the English ministry thought proper to use all their influence to prevent his return to Spain. On the formal application of the British envoy, the Queen replied, much to the honour of Alberoni, “ I shall be far from consenting to the restoration of a minister, who did not allow me sufficient to provide common necessaries.”

In 1732, Alberoni retired to Placentia, where he was graciously received by the Infant Don Carlos, and permitted to found a seminary, which he endowed at considerable expense. Here he seems to have devoted himself to those studies, in which a mind like his, might find not only amusement, but occupation. In the first days of his disgrace he had kept by him a copy of *Thomas à Kempis de Imitatione Christi*, which is still preserved in the Ducal library at Parma, with marginal notes of his journey, written in his own hand. But this extreme devotion seems to have lasted no longer than the first feelings of mortification and disgust; it was only at the moment when he failed in the world, that he endeavoured to despise it, and he never was anxious to obtain the favour of Heaven but at the period when he had lost that of the Spanish court. During his subsequent life, he

applied himself with earnestness to the perusal 1720.  
of Livy, Tacitus, and other immortal writers of  
ancient history.

In 1746, his seminary was occupied by the Imperial forces, to favour their attack on Placentia. Alberoni took refuge within the city, and is described by a French officer, who saw him and conversed with him, as living in a single room, where he had kindled his fire with an apricot tree, which he had himself cut down, and was busy cooking his dinner with his own hands. Although then eighty years of age, he conversed with great energy, speaking alternately in French, Italian, and Spanish, and supporting his opinions by frequent quotations from Tacitus. He dwelt with particular pleasure on his plans for the restoration of the Pretender to the throne of England. He was at this time an object of great veneration to the Spanish troops, whose military fame had faded from the period when he directed their arms.

At the close of his life, Alberoni was appointed by Benedict XIV. vice Legate of Romagna. In this situation he drained the marshes in the vicinity of Ravenna, and excavated a great number of canals to carry off the superfluous waters of the neighbouring torrents into the Adriatic. Not satisfied, however, with this useful and meritorious work, he projected the reduction of the republic of

1720. San Marino to the obedience of the Holy See. But just as he was accomplishing his object, the sound of the word liberty, in the celebration of the mass, roused the zeal of the people ; they marched to the defence of their little town, and Alberoni was defeated in overturning the freedom of San Marino, as he had formerly been in subverting that of England.

Character  
of Alberoni.

Alberoni was in person of low stature ; his features were far from handsome, and his head was too large for his body. His voice was melodious, his look piercing ; he acquired among the Spanish grandees an air of dignity, which suited ill with the original coarseness and vulgarity of his manners. He was proud, hot and revengeful by nature, but extremely skilful in modulating his passions to the key which his interests required. Indefatigable in application, he frequently employed himself in business for nineteen hours out of the twenty-four. He is remarkable for having united the most lofty designs, with a strange degree of low cunning in carrying them into effect ; and perhaps merits better than any one the title of Jupiter Scapin, which has been applied to a far greater man of our own day. Although capable of conceiving the most vast and magnificent projects by the vigour of his imagination, he seems to have been destitute of elevation of soul ; and



whether cooking Italian dishes and uttering coarse 1720.  
jokes for the amusement of the Duke of Vendome,  
or planning the overthrow of the governments of  
England and France to gratify the passions of  
Philip, he appears to have been always intent  
upon his own elevation, at any cost, and by any  
means.

In his foreign policy, Alberoni evidently aimed  
at gigantic objects, with very inadequate means,  
or at best with only a slight chance of success.  
If he must be acquitted of the charge commonly  
brought against him, of provoking a hopeless con-  
test, he is only so much the more blameable for  
having wantonly sacrificed the blood and treasure  
of Spain, and disturbed the peace of Europe, for  
the sake of preserving his place. Nor does he de-  
serve our pity when, in return for the sacrifice of  
his own conscientious opinions, we see him aban-  
doned and persecuted by the very sovereigns, to  
gain whose favour he had swerved from his duty  
as the minister of a great nation. It cannot be  
denied, however, that the spirit displayed by Al-  
beroni might, in a better cause, have revived the  
greatness of Spain.

Review of  
his Admi-  
nistration.

In his government of the interior, Alberoni  
formed many plans, some of which he carried into  
execution. He promoted projects for improving  
the ports of Cadiz and Ferrol, and established

1729. new docks and arsenals in those and other ports. In the short period of his administration, fourteen men of war were launched, and as many more were nearly completed. He founded a seminary at Cadiz for five hundred pupils to be instructed in navigation, and revived the foundery of artillery and the manufacture of small arms. With respect to commerce, he destroyed most of the inland custom-houses, abolished the internal duties of Valencia, and despatched intelligent engineers to the different provinces, to ascertain what improvements could be made in the economical government of the kingdom. With the usual policy of active ministers of those times, he established manufactures of glass, woollens, and linens; and though it must be confessed that his measures, in this respect, tended to furnish the Spaniards with dear and bad articles, instead of cheap and good ones, it is difficult to blame a minister who governed so short a time, and had not particularly studied the subject, for sharing in the prejudices of the age.

Yet it must never be forgotten that Alberoni, while he seemed to promote commerce and industry, had risen to power by favouring that institution, which is the bane of all commerce, and all active exertion of every description. By taking part against Macanaz, he preserved the privileges

of the Inquisition, and with them the source of all 1720.  
the misery and degradation of Spain. Let us not  
be dazzled, therefore, by the brilliant genius of  
Alberoni; and while we admire the activity and  
resources of his mind, let us not give our esteem,  
or the honours of fair fame, to an unprincipled  
adventurer, whose momentary power shows only  
the caprice of fortune, the force of intrigue, and  
the decline of Spain.

After the dismissal of Alberoni, Philip was still  
unwilling to sign a peace with the allied powers.  
In reply to the propositions of Holland, he made  
demands differing but little in extent from those  
which had been offered by the Cardinal; thus  
showing that his late minister had not acted alone,  
and that his obstinacy had been the sole obstacle  
to peace. So long did this resistance continue,  
that the allies thought it necessary to take new  
steps for the attainment of their object. While  
D'Aubenton was employed by the Regent, Earl  
Stanhope sent his confidential secretary, Sir Luke  
Schaub, to co-operate with Scotti in the negotiation.  
At length, the resistance of Philip was overcome  
by the earnest solicitations of the Queen, who feared  
that if any further time were lost, she should  
be deprived of all chance of the reversion of the  
duchies for her son. Philip announced, therefore,  
his accession to the Quadruple Alliance by a royal

Philip ac-  
cedes to the  
Quadruple  
Alliance.

1720. decree, declaring that he gave peace to Europe at the expense of his interests, his possessions, and his rights.

Feb. 1720. By this act, Philip renewed his renunciation of the crown of France, and relinquished all claims to the dominions which had been dismembered from the Spanish monarchy. He recognised the Duke of Savoy as King of Sardinia; consented to the transfer of Sicily to the Emperor, and promised to evacuate those islands within the term of six months. In return, he was acknowledged by the Emperor as King of Spain and the Indies, and the eventual succession of Tuscany and Parma was entailed on the issue of the Queen, on condition that these duchies should never be united with the crown of Spain. In the mean time, in order to secure the possession upon the death of the reigning sovereigns, the fortresses were to be occupied by six thousand Swiss in the pay of the mediating powers. Thus ended the impotent enterprize of Philip.

In order to complete the view of the state of Europe during this period, it is necessary to speak of some events and transactions, which, for the sake of keeping the story unbroken, have been either omitted, or very slightly mentioned.

The Emperor Charles the Sixth, who had with so much difficulty been induced to make peace

with France, after the general pacification of Europe at Utrecht, had shown no less repugnance to the project offered by the maritime powers for a barrier against France. The defence of the Netherlands, by Spain, had been so very negligent, that it was thought absolutely necessary a Dutch force should occupy several of the fortresses on the frontier of France. But the Emperor, naturally enough it must be confessed, felt strong objections both to the admission of foreign garrisons in his towns, and to the payment of a subsidy for their maintenance. At length, at the earnest request of England, he complied with the proposal, and General Cadogan signed a treaty, called, like former engagements of the same kind, the Barrier Treaty; by which it was provided that a body of from thirty to thirty-five thousand men was to be maintained in the Netherlands, of which the Emperor was to furnish three fifths, and the States two; the States were to have the sole right of garrison in Namur, Tournay, Menin, Furnes, Warneton, Ypres, and the fort of Knoque; a sum of five hundred thousand crowns was to be paid yearly by the Emperor for the support of the Dutch troops. Thus, it was imagined, an effectual barrier was provided against the power of France, on the side of Holland, the favourite object of William the Third, and of the defenders of European inde-

1715.

Barrier  
Treaty.November  
15, 1715.

1715. pendence, from the time of the war of 1672. But in fact the barrier, so laboriously provided, was, after all, an ineffectual defence. The Emperor became disgusted with a province which he appeared to hold only for the benefit of the maritime powers, and the people of the Netherlands were indignant at seeing themselves forced, contrary to their ancient constitution, to pay money without the consent of their own states. It was an additional hardship in their eyes, that the supply was raised for the support of the troops of a government, and a religion, different from their own. Hence, the protection of the Netherlands by Austria was always feeble and reluctant, the statesmen of Vienna scarcely valuing a possession, however rich and valuable, which was encumbered with such a mortgage. They considered, with some appearance of justice, that since the maritime powers had shown so much anxiety for the defence of the Netherlands, it might be left to them to bear the burthen. Such was the result of the military skill of Marlborough, and the political wisdom of the greatest statesmen of England and Holland !

War between Venice and the Porte.

Before concluding this chapter it will be proper to refer to the events of the war of Turkey, which has been already noticed. The great war of the Spanish succession had scarcely terminated, when

news arrived at Venice of an extraordinary activity 1715.  
in the arsenal of Constantinople, and it soon appeared that the Turks had resolved to reconquer the Morea, wrested from their hands in 1685 and the following year, by Morosini. Historians have ridiculed the Ottoman Porte for remaining a quiet spectator of the war of the European powers, and delaying his aggression till peace was re-established; but internal dissensions had hitherto distracted the court of Constantinople; and it would be more reasonable to blame the want of foresight of the Venetians, who aware, as they must have been, of the designs of the Turks, had left the Morea guarded by a force of only eight thousand men. That peninsula was now invaded by an army of an hundred thousand strong, seconded by a fleet of one hundred sail. A line of fortification which the Venetians had drawn across the Isthmus of Corinth was instantly forced; Corinth, Argos, Napoli di Romania, Modone and Malvasia were taken in a single summer; the whole of the Morea acknowledged the government of the Porte, and in all the course of this conquest not a single instance appeared even of the most common of all kinds of courage; namely, that which is shown in defending a walled town against a besieging enemy. The island of Candia indeed, under the command of Magno and Giustiniani, offered some resistance,

June and  
July, 1715.



1716. but in the month of November the Turks were completely masters of it, and the Venetians were thus deprived of their last possession in the East.

Treaty between Austria and Venice.  
April 13,  
1716.

Fortunately for Venice, her misfortunes, if not her valour, excited the sympathy of Europe. The Duke of Savoy proposed a league in her favour under the conduct of France, and the Emperor, to avoid this unpleasant interference in Italy, took upon himself by treaty, the defence of the Venetian territories. In the mean time Count Schullembourg, with some German troops, was engaged by the Venetian government to defend Corfu: this he successfully performed till the Spanish fleet, despatched by Alberoni, came to his assistance, and obliged the enemy to raise the siege. The Turks lost fifteen thousand men in this fruitless attempt.

Victory of Peterwaradin.  
August 5,  
1716.

Before this event took place, a far more important succour had marched to save the Venetian territories in Dalmatia. Prince Eugene, at the head of an army flushed with victories over the best troops of France, passed the Danube in sight of an hundred and fifty thousand Ottomans, commanded by the Vizier in person, encamped near Peterwaradin. The Imperial commander immediately led his forces against the enemy, and though far inferior in numbers, completely routed him, took fifty standards, two hundred and fifty

pieces of cannon, and caused a loss to the Turks 1716.  
of thirty thousand killed, including the Grand Vizier himself. The fall of Temeswar followed this victory, and the whole of Wallachia yielded to the conqueror.

The success of Prince Eugene was not less brilliant the following year. In the month of June he invested Belgrade, a town of great strength, defended by a garrison of thirty thousand men. After two months of blockade, an immense Turkish army advanced to the relief of the place, and stretching from the Danube to the Save, actually besieged the besiegers. Eugene had strongly fortified his camp, and had nothing to fear from an attack; but his situation was unhealthy, and numbers of his troops perished daily by the galling fire of the Ottomans. At length his position was rendered apparently hopeless, by the Turks taking possession of an eminence commanding a bridge over the Save, by which alone he could retreat. But it is not safe to reduce to despair, a general, whose genius stands him in stead of all other resources. Eugene summoned a council of war, which unanimously agreed to his proposal to engage. For this purpose he had a force of less than forty thousand men, with whom he was to attack intrenchments of great strength, defended by an army of two

Victory of  
Belgrade.  
August 16,  
1717.

1717-18. hundred thousand; but his name inspired the troops with unbounded confidence, and the memory of repeated victories made the general view his danger with composure. A little before midnight, the signal for the advance of the army was given by the discharge of three bombs. About two, the right wing fell upon the enemy's line, and surprized the guard. But a vigorous resistance was made at some new entrenchments formed by the Turks, and a thick fog adding to the darkness, created confusion in the Imperialists. At length, the fog being dispelled by the rising sun, Eugene saw his right wing separated from the rest of the army, and nearly surrounded by innumerable Turks. He instantly placed himself at the head of the second line, and charged the enemy; a wound which he received in advancing only added to the spirit of his troops, and the Turks fled before him. His right wing thus rescued, Eugene surveyed the intrenchments with the view of directing his army in the most scientific and least dangerous manner; but the troops, animated by what had just passed, rushed on with a force at once ungovernable and irresistible; carried the batteries, and turned the cannon of the Turks with prodigious effect against their own thick and clumsy masses. Before mid-day, the camp, cannon, and intrenchments of the enemy,

were in possession of the Imperialists : the Turks 1717-18. ran with such barbarous haste, that the soldiers in the rear killed their comrades who were before, to clear the path of their flight. Belgrade surrendered the next day to the victorious army.

In the following year, by the intervention of England, peace was signed at Passarowitz between Austria, Venice, and the Porte. By this treaty, Austria obtained the Bannat of Temeswar, Orsowa, Belgrade, part of Wallachia as far as the river Aluta, the two banks of the Save from the Dwina to the Unna, and a part of Servia, marked out by the treaty. Venice, on the other hand, lost for ever the Morea, and only obtained, in return, some places in Dalmatia and Albania, which she had acquired during the war. Thus, if Austria seems to have shown some generosity in listening to the prayers of Venice, the result showed that the fruits of her victories were strictly reserved for her own advantage.\*

July 21,  
1718.

\* For this war, see *Histoire du Prince Eugene*, t. v. Coxe, *House of Austria*. Daru, *Hist. de Venise*.

## CHAPTER III.

*Internal Government of France during the Regency. Characters of the Duke of Orleans and the Abbé Dubois. D'Aguesseau. Scheme of Law. His failure, and flight. Elevation of Dubois. His death. Death of the Duke of Orleans. State of France. General result of the Regency.*

1715. SOME historians have been so dazzled by the splendour of military achievements, that they have devoted nearly all their pages to the relation of the various accidents of war between contending kings or nations, and it is only by chance, as it were, that the notice of the adoption of a new code, or a total change in the manners of the people, drops from their pen. Yet Livy and Tacitus, two of the greatest of historians, have employed the utmost powers of thought, and splendour of style, to delineate the domestic facts of the republic and empire of Rome. Indeed I am inclined to believe not only that the internal his-

tory of a nation is eminently instructive in itself, 1715. but that in such a history, if usefully given, may best be traced the causes of those mighty convulsions and revolutions of mastery and dominion, which attract the whole attention of more vulgar observers.

After passing in review the establishment of the liberties of England by the accession of the House of Hanover, and the disturbance created in Europe by the impotent ambition of Philip the Fifth and his Queen, our attention is now to be turned to the internal history of France during the Regency, a period cherished by many who lived at the time for its pleasures, but execrated by posterity for its vices.

The Duke of Orleans, placed by the consent of the Parliament in possession of an unrestricted Regency, was in person of a middle size, stout, not handsome either in face or in figure, but with an agreeable countenance, and such grace and dignity in all his motions, that the absence of personal advantages was scarcely perceived. He was open, easy, and affable in his manners; his voice was pleasing; he was endowed with a happy memory, a clear judgment, and a natural eloquence, which supplied the place of instruction, giving to his conversation the appearance of being the result of profound and extensive reading. Without

Character  
of the Re-  
gent.

1715. losing any of his dignity, he conversed on a footing of equality ; and those who knew how superficially he had studied, were the most surprised at his great command of language, and the admirable perspicuity of his understanding. In his disposition he was brave, generous, and humane, never resenting an injury, and viewing the most atrocious designs against his person with an indulgence which, in the opinion of his friends, went even to a fault. He himself was proud of the natural kindness of his heart, and above all things loved to be compared to Henry the Fourth, whom he resembled indeed both in his virtues and his faults, and had he been favoured with the benefit of adversity, might perhaps have equalled in fortune and in fame. In war he showed great capacity, and understood well both the minute details of an army, and the general merits of a campaign.

With all these great and good qualities, the Duke of Orleans had many and serious defects. His mother, who was fondly attached to him, used to describe him by saying, that the fairies had come to the birth of her son, and had each given him a talent or a virtue, till at last one wicked fairy, who had not been invited, arrived, and not being able to take away his virtues and talents, predicted that he would not make a good use of



them. The observation thus ingeniously clothed, 1715. was a sober and melancholy fact. The Duke of Orleans, endowed with an excellent understanding, had that pliability of disposition, which, while it keeps in the straight path a person bound by strict laws, or dependent upon virtuous superiors, is almost sure, in a man of great station, to be the precursor of a vicious life. He had neither the energy of soul requisite to found his conduct upon principle, nor the moral taste to prefer the upright and the virtuous, to the dishonest and the debased. His education had greatly assisted this original fault of his nature. In his father's court he had learnt a habit of perpetual gossip, and acquired a fondness for little intrigues, and petty treacheries, which he carried with him into the government of the state. In the management of the court, it was his system to repeat to every one what had been said of him by his neighbour; and thus to cause a universal distrust and jealousy, by means of which he hoped to prevent any cabal against himself.\* In foreign affairs his conduct had the same double aspect; wheels within wheels, intrigue built upon intrigue, professions of friendship to enemies, and acts of enmity to friends; such were his favourite methods of treating with neighbouring states. In his personal opinions and beha.

\* St. Simon.

1715. viour, he had the misfortune to be very much guided by the Abbé Dubois, who fastened himself to his fortunes, as dirt attaches itself to a piece of wax.

Dubois. The Abbé Dubois was a man of as profligate a character as ever appeared on the stage of European politics. He was the son of an apothecary at Brives-la-Gaillarde, in the Limousin, and had embraced the church, as the profession the most likely to raise a man of his birth to a level with peers and princes of the land. Early in life he had been sent to seek his fortune in the capital, and had been employed by a doctor of the Sorbonne in a menial capacity. Having gained some instruction, he rose somewhat higher, and St. Laurent, the preceptor of the Duke of Orleans, introduced him to that prince when still a boy. Dubois acquired his confidence ; and by a happy mixture of talent and address, enabled him to make a display on some public occasion. St. Laurent, who was an excellent and able man, dying shortly after the commencement of his task, Dubois insinuated himself into the place, and soon became the friend, as well as the tutor of the young prince. When Lewis the Fourteenth wished his nephew to marry his natural daughter, Dubois was the person who overcame his reluctance ; and thus, in some measure, conciliated the favour of the monarch. When the Duke of Orleans, disgusted with his marriage,

threw himself into the arms of a mistress, Dubois 1715. was the person who assembled in the house of Mme. D'Argenton, the most disreputable society of Paris. In fine, Dubois conducted his pupil into every kind of debauch, and guided his unpractised youth through the paths of sensuality, with all the fastidious discrimination of acquired profligacy. At the same time, as if to drown the voice of conscience, he told him that virtue was a thing which did not exist; that honesty in men, and chastity in women, were mere illusions; that religion was fit to impose only upon fools, and could not bind a Prince of so much talent and judgment. Dubois was himself an undisguised atheist, and made use of a false theory to support a vicious practice. He never spoke truth; and when his lies were discovered, laughed openly at the accusation. Ambitious, covetous, and libidinous, he sought only to gratify his passions to the utmost, and was not afraid or ashamed of any baseness, any perfidy, any treachery, that were likely to procure for him power, pleasure, or wealth. With this detestable character he was well informed, lively in conversation, and would have been agreeable, had not all his humour and mimicry been directed with some interested view. He had much of the good-nature of his master, and was still more indifferent to reputation.

1715. The Duchess of Orleans, mother of the Regent, had asked as an only favour of her son, that he would not employ Dubois. He promised, and broke his promise:—before the end of the year 1715, Dubois was made counsellor of state.

At the commencement of his government the Regent eagerly sought for means of improving the internal condition of the country; and it is said that, for this purpose, he spent three or four hours a day in perusing the manuscripts of the Duke of Burgundy, who had consigned to paper his plans for restoring prosperity to the kingdom.

Appoint-  
ment of  
Councils.

One of the first changes made was said to be taken from these manuscripts.\* It consisted in placing the administration in the hands of councils, composed of several members; a specious, but not very convenient mode of directing the affairs of a state. The presidency of the council of war was given to Marshal Villars; of the council of finance to the Duke of Noailles; of the council of foreign affairs to Marshal D'Uxelles; of the council of conscience to the Cardinal de Noailles; of the council of marine to Marshal D'Estrées; of the council of the interior to the Duke of Antin. Let us turn our attention to the principal of these councils.

Every one was rejoiced to see the Cardinal de

\* *Memoires de la Régence*, t. 1, p. 20.

Noailles placed at the head of the church, by 1713-16. whose myrmidons he had so long been worried. Two days after the funeral of Lewis the Fourteenth the Regent ordered the liberation of the Jansenists, who were in great numbers in the prisons. The Marquess of Arenbergh, who had been twelve years detained in the Bastille for having aided Quesnel to escape from the prison of Malines, excited, in a special manner, the attention and interest of the public. But the rejoicings of private families over their fathers, husbands, and brothers, and of congregations over their pastors, thus happily restored to them, were more lively and more lasting. Never perhaps did prisons send forth so great a number of virtuous men, as were delivered on this occasion. The same measure, executed with equal wisdom, took effect in the provinces. The Jesuits stormed, but stormed in vain. The disputes on the subject of the constitution Unigenitus still continued, however, in spite of the pacific temper of the Regent. In the beginning of the year 1716 the Regent wrote a letter to the syndic of the Sorbonne, desiring the doctors to preserve silence on this affair.\* But some of the bishops still persisting in their opposition, wrote to demand explanations from Rome; Rome, as usual, refused to give any.

\* *Mémoires de la Régence*, t. 1, p. 69.

1715-16. The Jesuit Le Tellier had appeared at first undismayed by the victory of the adverse party. He went with confidence to the Regent, and asked what he was to do till the young King should require his ministry as confessor, the post to which he had been appointed by the late King. The Duke of Orleans answered coolly, "That does not concern me; address yourself to your superiors." Soon afterwards he was exiled to Amiens, whence he was transferred to La Flèche, where he died in 1719. His morose imperious temper never left him, and was the torment of his convent, as it had before been the misfortune of an empire.

Finances.  
Duke of  
Noailles.

The council of finance, of which the nominal chief was Marshal Villeroy, was presided over by the Duke of Noailles, a person whose character, from the part he played in these times, deserves some attention. He possessed considerable abilities for war and politics, and transcendent talents for a court. In society, he had the art of touching with grace and delicacy the driest topics, and of making his own opinion prevail, while he always appeared to follow that of the person with whom he spoke. He was active, restless, and ambitious, had no other rule of conduct than a constant pursuit of his own interest, and spared no means, either of servility to superiors, or calumny against rivals, for obtaining his private ends. When



Lewis the Fourteenth, angry with his uncle, took 1715-16.  
an objection to the name of Noailles, the *cómp*-  
plaisant courtier said, he had learnt from his an-  
cestors to have no other will but that of the so-  
vereign, and was quite ready to adopt any other  
appellation. When Madame de Maintenon was  
in power, he married her niece and affected an  
extreme devotion, which won the heart of that  
pious lady. After the death of Lewis he changed  
his friends and his manners ; kept a dancer of the  
Opera ; and when the Regent went to a ball in-  
toxicated, Noailles was sure to stagger.\* Such  
was the man who was put at the head of the  
finances, where he was supposed not to be free  
from corruption, and to consult his own interest  
at least as much as that of the state.† His agree-  
able conversation and accommodating humour  
were, no doubt, his passports to the favour of the  
Regent.

The finances were, in truth, in a most alarming  
state. The capital of the public debt amounted

\* St. Simon. Duclos. Bolingbroke's Letter to Wyndham.

† His chief assistant in the finances, was M. Rouillé de  
Coudrai, a very honest man, but fond of wine to a vice.  
One day that he was speaking with an habitual frankness  
in the presence of the Regent, Noailles said to him, " M.  
Rouillé, il y a ici de la bouteille."—" Cela se peut, M. le  
Duc, mais jamais de pot de vin." The retort was felt by  
all, and applauded.



1715-16. to 3000 millions, the revenue to 145 millions, and the public expenditure to 142 millions a year. A more desperate situation cannot well be imagined. When it was brought before the council, the Duke of St. Simon, a man of strict honesty, and severe opinions, proposed a no less desperate remedy. He advised the Regent to convoke the States General, and laying before them the accounts of the kingdom, declare at once that a public bankruptcy was the only remedy for so prodigious an evil. Before we discuss the justness of such advice, let us reflect for a moment on this calamitous result of the reign of Lewis the Fourteenth. An age of glory abroad, and of splendour at home, celebrated above all for the grandeur of the monarch, ends with a proposition to declare the state bankrupt, and make the sovereign abdicate his power ! This fact alone tells more against the government of Lewis the Fourteenth, than a thousand laboured panegyrics can weigh in his favour.

Bankruptcy proposed.

If we now pass to consider the value of the advice given, it will be found more easy to declaim against it, than to shake it by argument. The state had engaged itself for more than it could pay ; a full satisfaction of all demands was impossible. How had this calamity been brought about ? By mis-management of the finances, and by running

into expenses, without the means of providing payment. What better remedy then, than to call the nation together, to lay the whole case before them, and to provide, with their assistance, a settlement of past claims, the most consistent with justice, and such a provision for future control, as might prevent a like misfortune? The step, it is true, was bold, and even hazardous; but in the existing good temper of the nation, and popularity of the Regent, it is very possible a course might have been traced out, by which the public money would have been placed under regular inspection, and all subsequent convulsion prevented, without materially diminishing the prerogative of the King. An assembly of the States General in 1715, would have met with a far different spirit from that of the States General of 1789. Some concessions certainly it would have been necessary to make, but with a people so devoted to their kings as the French then were, these concessions might have been exchanged for such an arrangement of the taxes, as would have made the revenue greatly the gainer. In process of time the States General might have acquired the power of the purse, and have fixed upon that fulcrum the liberties of their country; but the people would then have been gradually prepared for freedom, and worthy to enjoy it. 1715-16.

1716. It seemed the more probable that the Duke of Orleans would have listened with favour to the proposition of St. Simon, as he always professed a great admiration of the English government, and was accustomed to quote, with praise, an anecdote of Charles the Second, who being much disturbed by the attentions paid to one of his mistresses by the Grand Prieur of France, was yet unable by the laws to send him out of the kingdom, and was obliged at length to apply to Lewis the Fourteenth for his recall. But this admiration of freedom in the Regent, probably did not extend to practice; and he would have been loth to let escape from his own hands, the power which he thought might elsewhere be wisely restrained. On this occasion, at least, he supported the Duke of Noailles, who strongly opposed the project of St. Simon, and represented it as fraught with calamity and mischief. This decision, I own, appears to me to have been most unfortunate for France.

Measures  
of Finance.

The measures which were adopted to supply the deficit, betokened little real wisdom, and still less integrity. The first of them was a recoinage, and alteration of the standard, by virtue of which, those who brought their money to the mint received only four-fifths of it back, with the same denomination as before. Seventy-two millions of livres were gained by the treasury in this manner;

but it is evident, that, besides the opportunity 1716.  
afforded to foreigners who were debtors to Frenchmen, to perform the same operation, and make the same gain ; the general disturbance of trade, and the injustice done to creditors, both public and private, more than counterbalanced any immediate advantages that might accrue from this favourite fraud of the government of France.

The next operation of the council of finance was to order a *visa*, or examination of all the outstanding debts of the state. A complicated instruction was framed, according to which the creditors of the state were to be divided into different classes, and paid in different proportions : the original creditors were to receive the most ; those who had bought stock merely with a view to profit, were to receive only one fifth of the original capital ; a distinction at once ignorant and unjust. By this means, however, three hundred and thirty-seven millions of paper bonds were annihilated, as either forged or surreptitiously obtained, or *usurious*. This last clause is convenient and comprehensive ; but to annul by force, the engagements which had been contracted by folly, seems little better than an open and direct bankruptcy.

The operation of the *visa* led to the establishment of a commission, or *chambre ardente*, instituted with the avowed object of inquiring into the

1716. misconduct of the loan contractors during the late reign. This measure was extremely acceptable to the people; and they were delighted to see the punishment of death denounced against the money-lenders, whom, with the usual prejudice, they viewed as the cause of all their past and present misery. But both the people and the court soon relaxed their severity; the one from compassion, the other from corruption. The researches of the *chambre ardente* did not produce more than fifteen millions of livres. As usual, the weak were oppressed, and the rich escaped with impunity. Some few were arbitrarily taxed to a large amount; but in general the great spoilers made their bargain with the courtiers, and escaped for a moderate ransom. One of them had been taxed at twelve millions of livres; Count — called upon him, and offered to procure his discharge for one hundred thousand crowns; “You are too late,” said the financier; “I have made my bargain with your wife for fifty thousand.”\* Thus the nobility and courtiers sold the public interest, and the monied men were too happy to be allowed to buy it. Nor did the people complain of this notorious scandal.

\* Vie de Philippe d'Orleans, t. i. p. 171, par M. de la Hode. The keeper of the Seals having accepted from a rich contractor a magnificent pair of silver wine-coolers, was called by the punsters *Garde des Seaux*.

“These men,” they said, “have filled themselves 1716.  
with our money, and will require less in future;  
but if a new set were brought in their place, they  
would be ravenous with hunger, and we should be  
much worse off.” Thus the spoils of the money-  
lenders were divided among the favourites of the  
Regent, and the country gained nothing by the  
persecutions which had been directed against them.

The Regent's manner of living differed greatly  
from that of the old court. He rose at no very  
early hour, heavy with the fumes of wine of the  
night before. During the forenoon he gave au-  
diences, and saw the chiefs of the councils and the  
foreign ministers. At two, or half past, the whole  
court were admitted to see him take his chocolate.  
After this came the council, the opera, visits to  
the King, to his mother, and his daughter, the  
Duchess of Berry. The evening always ended  
by a supper, sometimes with his mistresses and  
a chosen party of courtezans, sometimes with the  
Duchess of Berry, two or three ladies of the court,  
and ten or twelve of the most profligate men in  
Paris, whom he called his *roués*. This denomi-  
nation, which he explained by saying that they  
were fit for the wheel, and they by saying that they  
would suffer the rack for his sake, was applied to  
Broglie, brother of the first Duke of that name,  
the Duke of Brancas, Canillac, Nocé, Biron, and

Manners of  
the Court.



1716. some other young men whose extravagance of debauch has failed in securing them an equal immortality. At the serrepasts the dishes were always prepared on the same floor, often by the hands of the guests, and were always exquisite. It may seem trivial to remark, that these suppers were the origin of the mode of life, and the art of cookery, which have since prevailed among the aristocracy of Europe. Great entertainments indeed were known from the commencement of modern history, and Lewis the Fourteenth was well acquainted with the perfection of plain cookery; but the Regent, and his daughter, were the first who combined a small chosen society with that refinement of preparation and variety of dishes, which afterwards distinguished the suppers of Paris, and is now to be found in the dinners of all the capitals of Europe.

This first specimen, if agreeable, was not moral. The guests of the Regents discussed all subjects, religious and political, the lapse of a lady, the faults of a minister, or the nature of the soul, with equal freedom. As the wine circulated, the conversation became more noisy and more indecent. The Regent spared no one, and was not spared. One night Madame de Sabran, who was a constant guest, said to him, "I believe, after God had made the rest of mankind, he took a separate piece of



clay, out of which he made princes and footmen." 1716.  
The Regent thought the joke excellent.

The mistresses of the Duke of Orleans were known to all the world, and proclaimed by himself with a freedom, which his mother often blamed as indiscreet and improper. "I assure you," answered her son, "you are mistaken; the women of our day are not like those of former times, and are glad to have their intrigues known." The principal and favourite mistress of the Regent was Madame de Parabère, whose chief merit was a taste for joyous suppers and noisy parties, in which her lover delighted. She was foolish, and never spoke of the affairs of state; an additional merit in the eyes of the Regent, who could not bear, in women, either sentiment or politics. He used often to complain to his mother, who relates the anecdote, that his former mistress, Madlle. Seri, required him to love her with an ardent and exclusive passion, of which he was quite incapable. He complained no less of those of his mistresses who endeavoured to make their intimacy with him a step to power. One day that Madame de Sabran was entering upon political subjects, he took her to a glass, and said, "Look at yourself, and then say if one ought to speak politics to so pretty a face."

In 1716 the tribunals of Guienne found an op-

Persecu-  
tions of the  
Protest-  
ants, 1716.

portunity to exercise the laws concerning the Protestants with all the bigotry of the late reign. Some protestant meetings were held at Montauban and at Clerac; they were discovered by the authorities in the very act of singing psalms: the military were called in, several were arrested, and the remainder dispersed without resistance. Mock trials and vindictive sentences followed. A wine house-keeper, who could scarcely read, was condemned to the galleys for life as a minister of the obnoxious sect. A widow was convicted of having received thirty persons in her house, who had been guilty of singing psalms. A silk-weaver was condemned to the pillory, and to be flogged in the market-place, for having had in his house an apprentice accused of reading at the protestant meetings. The Duke of Orleans being warmly solicited by his mother for a pardon, at first declined to interfere, but he afterwards ordered sixty-eight of these unfortunate people to be released from the galleys.\*

D'Agues-  
seau, 1717.

An occasion happily presented itself in the beginning of the year 1717, to reward a man of talents and of virtue. Voisin, the chancellor, the creature of Madame de Maintenon, who had made the will of Lewis the Fourteenth, and is believed to have sold the secret to the Duke of Orleans, died suddenly. The Regent immediately named

\* Mémoires de la Régence, t. ii. p. 6.

D'Aguesseau to the vacant post. D'Aguesseau 1717. was the son of a virtuous magistrate, and had been educated with the utmost care, to fit him for the first offices of the law. As Advocate General, he had shown so much eloquence and ability, that Denys Talon, one of the judges, said, "I should wish to finish as this young man begins." He was endowed with a mind at once retentive and creative, both large enough to compass the immense science of the law, and ready in applying its knowledge to new cases. Besides being an excellent classical scholar, he was a universal reader; and of so great application, that he was wont to say, a change of study was itself a recreation. He was totally devoid of that spirit of intrigue which disgraced the age; incorruptible in his judgments; luminous, and sometimes witty in conversation, even in his temper, and good-natured in his disposition.

With all these qualifications, D'Aguesseau had some defects, which caused a disappointment to those who expected to see in him the greatest of chancellors. So strong was his predilection for the profession of the law, that it made him regard almost with horror, any reversal of a decision which had been once given in the Parliament. Nay, his partiality embraced not only the reputation, but the interests of all who had followed

1717. the same studies with himself. Being asked one day if he had never thought of a method to prevent delay and extortion in legal proceedings, he replied, "I have often considered of it; but when I reflected on the number of barristers, attornies, clerks, and bailiffs I should ruin, I had not the heart to proceed." Besides this defect, he had a natural subtlety of understanding, which suggested to him a thousand objections to every solution of a legal difficulty. This original disposition was fortified by the habits contracted during many years of experience as Advocate General, an office, in which it is usual to place the arguments on both sides in the strongest possible light, before coming to a conclusion. Hence, the eloquence and knowledge of D'Aguesseau were much more celebrated than his promptitude of decision, and his talents were far more admired by the world in general, than by the suitors in his court. The delay and expense of legal proceedings became more ruinous than ever; the life of man wore out before his rights were ascertained; and justice, thus dearly purchased and long withheld, was often, when given, useless to either party. Upon being once reproached by a friend with his procrastination, D'Aguesseau replied: "When I consider that a decision of a chancellor is a law, I think it allowable to spend a long time in reflection." If long

reflection brought with it surer judgment, the 1717.  
 Chancellor might be right ; but it may be doubted, whether a mind fairly impressed with all the circumstances of a case, and having brought all its powers to bear once or twice upon the subject, can improve its judgment by any subsequent meditation. The same understanding does not mend its reasoning at every operation on the same matter ; generally speaking, it does but repeat, with some changes and illustrations, its former process. Finally, D'Aguesseau, weak in character as he was wavering in mind, allowed himself, as we shall soon see, to be made the instrument of a profligate administration ; and men who were incapable of understanding or admiring his virtues, covered themselves with the glory of his name to screen some of the worst acts of a flagitious government.

Although every thing reposed in obedience around the Regent, he was pleased to observe the princes of the blood raise fresh disturbance on the subject of the legitimated princes. The Duke of Bourbon, the Prince of Conti, and the Count of Charolois, presented a memorial to him, desiring that the edict by which Lewis the Fourteenth rendered his illegitimate sons capable of succeeding to the throne, might be revoked.\* They re-

Memorial  
 of the  
 Princes of  
 the Blood.

\* Duclos.

1717. presented, that the laws of the monarchy made legitimacy a necessary qualification for the crown; and that this edict deprived the nation of "the most glorious of its rights, that of disposing of itself in case of the extinction of the royal family." \* To add to the flame, the *Ducs et Pairs* demanded that the right of precedence granted to the legitimated princes, should be likewise revoked. Instigated by St. Simon, these noblemen pretended to a special rank in the state, which entitled them to the honours, if not to the power, of the great vassals of the crown in feudal times. The Duchess of Maine, on her side, (for the Duke was a cypher) encouraged the Parliament, the nobility, and even the Knights of Malta, to present counter memorials. She caused researches to be made, at which she herself assisted, into all the old laws of France, chronicles of Europe, ancient history, oriental voyages, and Hebrew customs, to establish a case in favour of illegitimate royalty. In the memorial, thus laboriously prepared, the legitimated princes appealed to the States General, of which they demanded an immediate convocation; and declared that, at all events, no decision on the subject could be legal, till the majority of the King.

The Regent, who, partly from his desire to

\* Vie de Phil. d'Orleans, i. 177.

prolong the quarrel, and partly from tenderness to his wife, the sister of the Duke of Maine, had appeared insensible to the storm, now thought it was time to wake from his slumber. He severely condemned the nobles; put six of them who had petitioned for the States General in the Bastile, and peremptorily forbade any assembly of the nobility or Knights of Malta. The nobles in vain alleged that they had met in 1649, to ask for the suppression of the *tabouret*, granted to two ladies. The Regent pursued his path, and removed the plea of the princes to the council of Regency, which, under his direction, issued an edict, annulling the acts and declarations of 1714 and 1715, and depriving the legitimated princes of the quality of princes of the blood, and the right of succeeding to the throne. They were allowed to preserve their honours in consideration of several years of possession. The demand of the *Ducs et Pairs* was not decided upon. What is most remarkable in the edict on this subject perhaps is, the confirmation it gives of the doctrine put forth by the princes of the blood. In case of the extinction of the royal family, it is declared, “that to the nation itself would belong the right to repair that misfortune by the wisdom of its choice; and as the fundamental laws of the kingdom make it happily impossible for us to alienate the domain of the

Decision of  
the Re-  
gent.  
2. July,  
1717.



1717. crown, we make it our glory to acknowledge that we are still less free to dispose of the crown itself."\* This acknowledgment of a popular right, in the midst of a thousand acts of arbitrary power, forms a curious anomaly; in other respects, the right spoken of being dormant as long as the reigning family should continue, was totally unimportant to the nation.

This was not the only affair of the kind. The privilege of giving the first vote in the Parliament, the right of walking first in a procession, the form and place of the *tabourets de grace*, were matters of grave discussion among a people whom Lewis the Fourteenth still inspired, but no longer controlled. Any one looking only to the trifling nature of these disputes, might infer that the kingdom was flourishing and happy; but the French have the gift of being frivolous in the depth of misery, and gay in the midst of horror.

System of  
Law.

But it is time to speak of the fortunes of a man whose madness, if madness it were, was caught first by the government, and lastly by the whole people of the capital. I allude to the celebrated scheme of Law.

John Law, of Lauriston, was descended from a respectable family in Fife. His father being a

\* Vie de Phil. d'Orleans, i. 194.

younger brother, had exercised the trade of a goldsmith at Edinburgh, and had acquired wealth sufficient to enable him to buy the estate of Lauriston, situated in the parish of Cramond, upon the Firth of Forth, on the borders of West and Mid-Lothian. He made a journey to Paris to suffer the operation for the stone, which, however, was performed so unskilfully, as to occasion his death in that city, about the year 1688.

The son, John Law, was born at Edinburgh in the year 1671. He was distinguished when young by his handsome person and foppish dress; so much so as to be called *Jessamy John*, and *Beau Law*; he was no less distinguished, however, for his proficiency in geography and algebra. He was at first taken into the counting-house, but on the death of his father he quitted business entirely, and went to London, where he lost so much money at play, that upon receiving from his mother a loan of considerable amount, he conveyed to her his paternal estate of Lauriston. He was more fortunate in gallantry, and gained the reputation of being extremely well received by ladies of the first rank and society in London. Even here, however, his success was the source of misfortune; for a love affair with a lady of the name of Lawrence led him into a duel with a

Previous  
life of Law.

1716. Mr. Wilson, whom he killed on the spot. Law was put into prison, but made his escape, and was advertized in the Gazette with the following description: "Captain John Law, a Scotchman, lately a prisoner in the King's Bench for murder, aged twenty-six, a very tall, black, lean man, well-shaped, above six feet high, large pock holes in his face, big nosed, speaks broad and loud," &c. Law, however, got clear off, and travelled in many foreign countries, where he made himself acquainted with the history of trade and commerce, and more especially with the regulations of the bank of Amsterdam. What is singular is, that he is said to have acted as secretary to the British resident in Holland, without receiving his pardon. In the year 1700 he appears to have been again in Scotland, for before the end of that year, he published at Edinburgh an introduction to his "Proposals and Reasons for constituting a Council of Trade." This was followed by a project, which made great noise at the time, for establishing a land bank; the notes of which were never to exceed two thirds of the value of the land, upon ordinary interest, or were to be equal in value to the land, with a right to enter into possession in a certain time. This scheme, though supported by the court, and by a neutral party

called the Squadrone, headed by the Duke of Ar- 1716.  
gyle, was rejected ; the Parliament passing a wise  
and manly resolution, “ that to establish any kind  
of paper credit, so as to oblige it to pass, was an  
improper expedient for the nation.” After this  
failure Law again left his native country, and tra-  
velled in Italy, Flanders, Germany, France, and  
Hungary. Resuming his habits of gaming, he won  
immense sums wherever he went, so much that,  
in 1714 he is said to have been worth £110,000.  
When at Paris, he frequented the chief gambling-  
houses, and seldom carried less than an hundred  
thousand livres of gold about his person. On his  
second visit to Paris, he proposed a scheme of  
finance to Desmarets, the controller, but it is said  
that Lewis the Fourteenth asking if he was a Ca-  
tholic, and being answered in the negative, de-  
clared that he would have nothing to do with a  
heretic. This story, however, merits little credit.

At length the time arrived when his speculations  
were to be tried on a great scale. Law commu-  
nicated his scheme, or system, to Victor Amadeus,  
Duke of Savoy, who told him that his dominions  
were too small for the execution of so great a de-  
sign, but advised him to go to France, saying,  
that if he knew any thing of the disposition of the  
people of that kingdom, he was sure they would

1716. relish his projects. Law took his advice, and set out for Paris. Not long after his arrival Lewis the Fourteenth died, and was succeeded by the Duke of Orleans, to whom Law had formerly been known. The vivacity and spirit of the Scotch adventurer, his love of play, gallantry, and intrigue, and above all the romantic grandeur of his scheme of finance, aided by a natural eloquence, facility, and clearness, soon gave him, an influence over the mind of a Prince who loved pleasure, and was desirous of doing great things with little trouble. The glory of war had been drained by Lewis the Fourteenth to the dregs, and the situation of France closed that avenue to fame; in such a position, reputation could only be acquired by restoring prosperity to the trade and agriculture of the country. But in ordinary course this was a tedious process; and the Regent readily embraced a scheme, which promised to pour forth plenty as from an enchanted cup, to create riches out of nothing, and to pay off the debts of the state without leaving any burthens on the debtor, or committing any injustice to the creditor. For such was the brilliant prospect opened by Law, to those who shutting one eye, applied the other to his raree-show exhibition.

Encouraged by a favourable reception, Law

translated his *Essay on Money and Trade* into 1716.  
French, and presented two memorials to the Regent. In these and other papers, he enlarged on the advantages of credit; maintained that the trade and commerce of every country required more currency than specie could supply; and produced the examples of Genoa, Amsterdam, and Great Britain, to show the advantages of a paper money. He proposed to set up a bank in France, which should have the management of the whole of the royal revenues, and issue paper both on that and on landed security; the company to be administered in the King's name, but subject to the control of commissioners, to be named by the States General. His proposal was at this time rejected, but Law was allowed to set up a private bank, in partnership with his brother, the notes of which should be received in payment of the taxes. In conducting the affairs of this bank, Law showed that he understood the true principles of credit: his notes were payable at sight: Law declared that a banker deserved death, if he made issues, without having in his possession funds sufficient to answer all demands; and to make his notes still more acceptable, he made them payable in the coin current at the time they were issued, and consequently, freed them from the depreciations to

Law sets  
up a Bank,  
1716.

1718. which the coin was subject.\* Hence, the credit of his bank rose so high, that his paper was received at one per cent. more than specie; trade was facilitated; confidence began to revive; the balance of exchange rose to four or five per cent. in favour of France, and the taxes were paid with greater ease than formerly. Had this plan continued, France would have had all the advantages of a bank similar to the bank of England, dependent on the credit of private merchants; but the impatience of the Regent, and the ambition of Law, destroyed the institution they had made, in an attempt to improve it.

It is converted into a Government Bank. 1718-19.

The bank had subsisted from May 1716 to the end of 1718, when the Regent, tempted probably by the gain of fifteen per cent. per annum, which had latterly accrued to the proprietors, declared by an act of council, that the King had taken Mr. Law's bank into his own hands, under the name of the Royal Bank; that he had reimbursed the proprietors for their shares, and had become answerable for their notes, amounting to fifty-nine millions of livres. The change of system was soon perceptible. Although the Regent had declared by an edict that the notes should never become subject to the variations of the coinage, yet the

\* See the edict for establishing this bank, in the *Mem. de la Régence*, t. i.



notes themselves promised only so many “livres in silver coin,” instead of livres “of the weight and standard of this day,” the form before used. The issues were increased beyond all proportion to the value of specie, or to the real wants of the country. In the year 1719, the first of the new bank, notes to the amount of one thousand millions of livres were fabricated. 1717.

In the mean time Law had commenced the execution of another great scheme; namely, the formation of a company, which, engrossing all the trade of the kingdom, and all the revenues of the crown, was to carry on the business of merchants to every part of the globe, be the sole farmers of the taxes, and sole coiners of money. This company, created by letters patent in August 1717, by which Law was made director, in the beginning aspired to no more than the possession and trade of the province of Louisiana, a country watered by the great river Mississippi, from which the project took its name of the Mississippi scheme. The property of this company was divided into 200,000 shares or actions of 500 livres each, and the subscription was ordered to be paid in *billets d'état*, which were received at their nominal value of 500 livres, though worth no more than 160 livres in the market. This of course was one great inducement to the holders of such notes to subscribe to the Mississippi Scheme, 1717.

1717. company; a much greater was, that the interest of these notes was fixed at four per cent. per annum, to be paid by the King. This circuitous mode of raising the value of the *billets d'état* seems to betray great ignorance; it is evident that the debt of the state might have been discharged, at much less cost. By the scheme adopted, the new company became entitled to receive in the whole twenty millions of livres annually from the King, the first year's payment of which was assigned to the expenses of the commercial enterprize. Other modes of raising the value of the shares were adopted without equal good faith. It was given out that new mines had been discovered in Louisiana; ingots were carried to the mint said to have been found there, and the produce was declared to be richer than that of the mines of Potosi. A troop of six thousand of the most indigent of the inhabitants of Paris were fitted up as miners, paraded through the town, and provided with tools to embark for the new Peru. By these dishonourable acts the value of the shares was raised, and the public credulity rose so high, that the unimproved parts of Louisiana were sold at the rate of thirty thousand livres the square league, to the amount of six hundred thousand livres. The *billets d'état* rose to their nominal value.

In the beginning of the year 1718, the Chan-

cellor D'Aguesseau was deprived of his office, and 1718.  
 ordered to retire to his country-house at Fresne. Disgrace of  
 This disgrace has been generally accounted for by D'Agues-  
 his opposition to the scheme of Law; by some it seau.  
 has been more plausibly attributed to his timid  
 resistance to the remonstrances of the Parliament,  
 who had taken a violent part against the new pro-  
 jects; others again have said, that D'Aguesseau  
 and Noailles had been detected in consultations  
 respecting the propriety of transferring the Re-  
 gency, in case the Duke of Orleans should lose  
 his sight by a disease in the eyes, which had for  
 some time afflicted him.\* Be the truth as it may,  
 D'Aguesseau and Noailles were disgraced toge-  
 ther, and the places of both were given to D'Ar-  
 genson. One of the first measures of this minister  
 was a fresh depreciation of the coin, in order to  
 extinguish the state paper. For this purpose it  
 was ordained, that persons bringing to the mint  
 four thousand livres in coin, and one thousand  
 livres in paper, should receive back five thousand  
 livres in the new coin; these five thousand livres  
 being of somewhat less intrinsic value than the  
 four thousand of the old currency.† This was  
 considered by D'Argenson an ingenious method of  
 paying off stock without any expense to the King;

\* Vie de P. d'Orleans. † Vie de P. d'Orleans, t. i.

1718. but it is manifest that it was in fact a flagitious and most impolitic fraud. For besides the direct ruin of the creditors of the state, which of course injured the public credit for the future, the inevitable consequences of this measure were the disturbance of all internal commerce, the bankruptcy of many well-established houses, and the profit of the foreign merchant at the expense of the subjects of France. These considerations were fully represented to the Regent by the Parliament. In the course of their remonstrance, they showed that an individual who carried to the bank one hundred and twenty-five marcs of silver and two thousand livres in government paper, received back only one hundred and sixteen marcs of silver under the same denomination. As the Regent refused to grant their prayer, the Parliament ordered, of their own authority, that no money should be received in payment but that of the old standard: the Regent annulled their decrees. The controversy continued for some time longer, till at length the Parliament aimed a blow at Law, whom they considered, in his quality of foreigner, as the real author of all their misfortunes. By their decree of the 12th of August, 1718, they forbade the bank of Law to have any concern in the public revenue, direct or indirect, and prohibited all foreigners from interfering

Resistance  
of the Par-  
liament.

August 12,  
1718.

either in their own names, or under the names of 1718.  
others, in the management or administration of  
the public revenue.\*

The Parliament, when they passed this mutinous decree, were determined to go still farther; they were fully prepared to enter upon the trial of Law; some among them, confident of their strength, went so far as to affirm that the affair might be finished in two hours, and proposed that Law should be seized and hung within the gates of the Palace of Justice, before the public could know what was going on. Law, with no unnatural apprehension, fled to the Palais Royal, and prayed for immediate steps against the Parliament. The Regent, uncertain what to do, contented himself at first with receiving the Parliament coldly, and giving them no answer on the subject of their proposition on the government paper. Of the courtiers and ministers who surrounded him, some saw with pleasure the downfall of Law, others feared to speak their opinions.

At this crisis two men, on whose talents the Regent placed a great reliance, took part against the Parliament. The one was the Abbé Dubois, conscious of the hatred of every man in the country who pretended to a character, and anxious to

D'Argenson.

\* Vie de P. d'Orleans, t. i. 257, 295.

1718. render despotic, a master whom he knew how to govern. The other was D'Argenson, who had been lately raised to the post of Keeper of the Seals. D'Argenson had been minister of police during the late reign; he was a man of great firmness, readiness, and sagacity, the reputation of which, added to the inestimable advantage of a forbidding countenance, gave him an extraordinary influence over the mob of Paris. With these requisites of a minister of justice, he joined great playfulness of temper, and an obliging disposition. He had made his court to the Duke of Orleans, by concealing from Lewis the Fourteenth some of the correspondence in Spain, in which that Prince's character was implicated. Having now risen to a high post in the state, he called forth all the resources with which native talent and long experience furnished him, to mortify the Parliament, at whose bar he had often received, with a submissive air but irritated mind, a reprimand for his conduct in the government of the police, mingled with threats of an enquiry into the sums he had levied on the public without legal authority. The remembrance of these scenes rankled in his breast, and embittered his counsels to the Regent.

While Law, Dubois, and D'Argenson were impelling the Regent on one side, other solicitations



came from a different quarter, on a subject of 1718.

another kind. The Duke of Bourbon could not bear that the Duke of Maine should have the direction of the King's education in preference to himself. The Regent, weary of his importunity, charged the Duke of St. Simon to induce him to forego, or delay his pretensions. But to all the refined and prolix arguments of St. Simon, the Duke of Bourbon only replied, that he knew the Regent could do it if he chose, and that his future friendship or enmity would depend upon the decision. St. Simon finding it impossible to shake him, bethought himself of a line of argument much more suitable to his own inclinations than to the Regent's instructions. He represented to the Duke of Bourbon, that if he would join the peers in their demand for the reduction of the Duke of Maine to his rank in the peerage, that object once accomplished, the taking away the education would follow of course. The Duke of Bourbon, after some demur, agreed, and the Regent, taken by surprize, was forced to consent. This point being thus settled, edicts were prepared, combining the objects of D'Argenson and Law, with those of the Dukes of Bourbon and St. Simon. The next step was to prevent resistance, by secrecy and dispatch : for this purpose it was agreed that, at six in the morning, the Parliament should be sum-

Rank of  
the Duke  
of Maine.



1718. moned to the Tuileries; that at eight, the Council of Regency should meet; and that a Bed of Justice should be held immediately afterwards.

Council of  
Regency.

The Duke of Orleans was much alarmed at the prospect of this strong measure, for if the Duke of Maine should resist, more than half the Council of Regency, and all the Parliament, would probably join him. Finding however that his adversary was more alarmed than himself, he took courage, and went through the day with coolness and composure. The Duke of Maine and the Count of Thoulouse, his brother, who had come to attend the council, retired as soon as they heard the subject of deliberation. When the edict for reducing the legitimated Princes to their rank of Peers was read, Marshal Villeroy alone said with a sigh, "Then all the dispositions of the late King are annulled; I cannot see it but with pain." The Regent suddenly replied, "Sir, the Duke of Maine is my brother-in-law, but I prefer an open enemy to a concealed one." While this was going on, St. Simon had laid open on the table the petition of the peers, to which the names of Villeroy and Villars were affixed.

Bed of  
Justice.

The Parliament was subdued with as much ease as the Council of Regency. When the first President, de Mêmes, endeavoured in an artful speech, but in a timid manner, to gain time for

considering the edicts which reversed the decrees of the Parliament, D'Argenson approached the throne, and pretending to take the orders of the infant monarch, called out in a thundering voice, "The King desires to be obeyed, and immediately." The other edicts, reducing the rank of the legitimated Princes, and giving the care of the King's education to the Duke of Bourbon, were then read: all were registered in silence. The Count of Thoulouse had his precedence restored to him by special favour. The triumph of the Regent was complete. \*

The day after this famous Bed of Justice the Parliament met, and protested that they had not taken any part in what had passed on that occasion. The Regent replied by arresting the President Blamont, and two counsellors, and sending them to distant prisons. The Parliament was humbled by this step. They made remonstrances indeed, but in a softened tone, and when the Regent was pleased some time after to release his prisoners, they expressed their thanks without qualification. The president Blamont, seeing the Parliament thus subdued, thought it better to change sides, and afterwards acted as spy for the court. †

\* St. Simon. Duclos.

† Vie de Phil. d'Orleans. Duclos.

1719. The relation of these affairs has somewhat led us out of the path which we were following, and to which I now return.

India Com-  
pany. 1719.

Towards the end of 1718, the company began to advance rapidly towards the objects of Law's ambition. About that time the charter of the Senegal company, and the royal farm of tobacco were placed in their hands. In the following year an edict appeared, granting them the exclusive privilege of trading to the East Indies, China, and the South Seas, together with all the possessions of the East India company established by Colbert, which was now dissolved. The company of Law upon this assumed the title of Company of the Indies, and fifty thousand new shares were created to meet their increased business. This number seems to bear a very inadequate proportion to the two hundred thousand created for the trade to Louisiana alone. In July and August of the same year, the Regent made over to the company the exclusive privilege of the mint, and the contract of the great farms. Thus they had in their hands almost all the commerce and revenue of France; Law promised a dividend of 200 livres yearly on each share of 500 livres, worth originally 160, that is to say, forty per cent. on the nominal value, and more than cent. per cent. on the real value of the original subscription. The conse-

quence was, such a demand for the fifty thousand 1719.  
new shares, that for several weeks all the people of  
highest rank in France appeared waiting on foot  
at Mr. Law's door, while he delayed declaring the  
names of the new stock-holders.

In September 1719, however, 300,000 new Sept. 1719.  
shares were created, at 5000 livres each, in order  
to lend the Regent a sum of 1500 millions of  
livres, at three per cent., to pay off the debt of the  
state. The one hundred millions formerly lent,  
were reduced to the same interest. Law had now  
issued six hundred thousand shares; and it is cal-  
culated that, with the interest of money lent to  
the King, his profits on the great farms, on the  
mint, on the farm of tobacco, on the general re-  
ceipt of taxes, and the profits of trade, he had  
more than 80 millions of livres of revenue, forming  
a yearly dividend of 133 livres for each share.\*  
Other writers, however, calculate the revenue of  
the company at 131 millions.

The lofty expectations held out by Law, the  
solid advantages the company had obtained, and  
the unbounded prospect which its commercial pri-  
vileges opened to the imagination, raised the value  
of the stock of the company beyond all reasonable  
measure. To increase the price, the Regent had  
got the whole of the number last created, together

Progress of  
the System.

\* History of Cramond.

1719. with one hundred thousand of the former shares, into his own hands; every means was employed to narrow the supply, while the demand increased so much, that in November 1719, ten thousand livres were given for a single share.

Frenzy of  
the Na-  
tion.

In the mean time an universal frenzy had seized the nation. Peers, judges, cardinals, bishops, ladies, ministers, shopkeepers, footmen, all turned gamblers, and speculated from morning till night on the rise and fall of stock. A clerk of the bank, seeing the avidity of the speculators to buy paper, called out to the crowd pressing at the door, "Never fear, Gentlemen, all your money shall be taken." A physician going to visit a lady, muttered all the time he felt her pulse, "It falls, it falls; oh, good God! it falls!" The lady alarmed, started and ran to the bell; but the doctor, surprised in his turn, relieved her anxiety, by telling her he was only speaking of the stocks. Two men of letters, M. de la Mothe, and the Abbé Terrason, talking together of the madness that had infected the nation, congratulated themselves that they were superior to the common delusion; but it so happened, that not long afterwards the two scholars met in the Rue Quincampoix, where they had both come to bargain for actions. As the shame was mutual, they rallied each other and pursued their course.

The Rue Quincampoix, where this traffic was 1719. carried on, became so continually thronged, that the houses situated in it were let at an extravagant rate. Houses for which eight hundred livres rent were usually paid, now yielded from six to sixteen thousand; and even a cobbler who had a stall of planks placed against a garden, earned two hundred livres a day by letting chairs, and furnishing pens and paper. Nay, a hump-backed man was said to have made one hundred and fifty thousand livres in a few days by letting out his back as a writing desk to the brokers. All the avenues leading into the street were filled by break of day, and at night it was necessary to use force to drive away the crowd. This concourse in a narrow street becoming exceedingly inconvenient, an edict was issued, prohibiting all persons from buying and selling stock in the Rue Quincampoix. The traffic was sometime afterwards transferred to the Place Vendome, the whole area of which was covered by tents, some filled with the stockholders, others destined for refreshments, and others again filled with gaming tables and lotteries, where inferior rogues imitated, on a small scale, the operations of the great state swindlers. All the evening the Place was filled with ladies and gentlemen of the highest rank, walking up and down; and this spot thus became at once the general market both



1719. of business and pleasure. At length the Chancellor, who had his court in one of the houses of the Place, complained that the noise was so great he could not hear the suitors. Mr. Law then bought the *Hotel de Soissons*, belonging to the Prince de Carignan, which was likewise situated in the Place Vendome. In the magnificent gardens of this palace six hundred pavilions were disposed among the trees and fountains, and an ordinance was issued by the Government prohibiting, under severe penalties, all buying and selling of stock except in one of these pavilions. Never were stock-jobbers so pleasantly accommodated !

Anecdotes.

The immense rise in the price of actions was naturally attended with sudden revolutions of fortune ; persons in the lowest stations of life were lifted by the expansion of the bubble to the highest, and their behaviour in their new position gave occasion to many ridiculous occurrences. Mr. Law's coachman having made his fortune, asked his master's leave to quit his service ; to which Mr. Law consented, with the condition, that he would provide another as good as himself. The man brought two of his former comrades ; and desiring Mr. Law to choose, said, that he himself would take the other to drive his own carriage. A Mdle. Begond being one night at the opera, observed a lady enter magnificently dressed :



she looked at her a short time, and then whispered 1719.  
her mother, "I am much mistaken if this fine lady is not Mary, our cook." The whisper spread through the theatre, till at length it reached the ears of the object of it, who turning round to Mdlle. Begond, said, "It is true; I am Mary, your cook; I won a large sum of money in the Rue Quincampoix; I like fine clothes and fine jewels, and you see me drest in them; I have paid for every thing I have on; can every one else say as much?" The most absurd blunders were made by these new favourites of fortune. One of them, who had ordered a coach, being asked what arms he wished to have on the carriage, answered, "Oh, the finest, by all means." A footman had become rich enough to buy a handsome carriage, but when it came to the door he got up behind instead of in the inside. A lady whose husband, a baker's son, had bought a vast quantity of fine plate, arranged it for supper in so strange a fashion, that the soup was served up in a basin for receiving church offering, and chalices were made to serve the office of salt-sellers. The rise of the stock was so rapid, that great fortunes were made, as it were, by accident. A person who was taken ill sent his servant to sell two hundred and fifty shares at 8000 livres each, but in the mean time the shares had risen to 10,000, and the servant

1719. gained 500,000 livres, which he put in his pocket. Many similar instances occurred of agents making a fortune at the expense of their employers. \*

While these things were happening among the creatures of the new system, it will excite no surprise to find the inventor of the machine, the discoverer of the new mine, the god of all this wealth, courted with a deference which amounted almost to worship. His antichamber was crowded from morning till night with ladies of the highest quality, all begging for a portion of the India stock. When the Regent wished to send a Duchess to Modena, to attend upon his daughter, some one in his presence said, "If you want a Duchess, you had better send to Mdme. Law's, for they are all there." Law himself was so surrounded by these ladies, that when once admitted into his room, he found it almost impossible to get rid of them.† One lady who had in vain attempted to obtain an audience, drove to a house where he was at dinner, and called out, "Fire! Fire!" All the company ran from the house; but Law seeing the lady jump out of her carriage to meet him, made off in the opposite direction. Another lady told her coachman to overturn whenever he should see Law

\* Hist. du Systeme.

† See a curious instance of this in Madame's Letters. Fragmens, ii. 274.

in the streets, and happening to see him first herself, she screamed out of the window, “overturn now! overturn now!” This lady was more successful: Law ran to her assistance, and she confessed her stratagem. 1719.

The family of Law shared in the honours paid to him. His son was appointed to dance with the young King, and his daughter was asked in marriage by the greatest families in France, and even in other countries of Europe.

In the midst of all this grandeur, Law seems to have retained an affection for his native country, and to have imbibed a thorough contempt for the people by whom he was so extravagantly courted. His countrymen, who had letters of introduction to him, were received with the greatest courtesy, and went away charmed with his affability, ease, and good-breeding.\* At the same period Archibald, Earl of Ilay, afterwards Duke of Argyll, going one day to see him by appointment, observed the antichamber crowded with people of quality; but on reaching the minister’s cabinet, he found him engaged in writing a letter to his gardener at Lauriston, with directions for planting cabbages; and when he had done, he invited the Earl to play a game of picquet with him. The Dukes and Peers of France were at last unable to obtain

Conduct of  
Law.

\* Hist. of Cramond, p. 190.

1719. admission without feeing his porter at the gate, his footmen in the antichamber, and the valets for admission to his own apartment.

Effects of  
the Sys-  
tem.

Hitherto the effects of the system had been striking, and even brilliant beyond expectation. The quantities of money and jewels which flowed into France from foreign countries were prodigious. The large fortunes acquired by speculators, and the rapid increase of the currency, created the greatest demand for goods of all sorts, and the nominal prices of all commodities increased wonderfully. Cloth rose from fifteen to fifty livres the ell; coffee from fifty sous to eighteen livres the pound; artificers' wages from fifteen sous to three livres a day. The most extravagant prices were given by the stock-jobbers; one of them gave two hundred livres for a single wood-hen for his dinner; and green peas were more than once sold for one hundred pistoles the pint. An immense crowd of strangers flowed into Paris. The streets were blocked up by the crowd of new equipages, and the warehouses stripped of all the fine cloth, of velvets, and cloth of gold, to supply the fortunate gamblers. It was generally remarked that the winter of this year exhibited more splendour of dress than the finest summer ever seen.

Nor were the advantages derived from the system, all of this doubtful or superficial nature.

The gains made by the Government, and the beneficial transfer of the debt, enabled the Regent to remit fifty-two millions of arrears on taxes, which had been imposed a few years before ; the rate of interest which had been so extravagantly high, sunk very low, and the whole country was filled with houses repairing, farms re-occupied, and fields better cultivated ; marks of an improving and flourishing condition which had been long unknown. 1720.

It was thought just that the author of this splendid change should be honoured with a new mark of the confidence of the Regent. With this view, it was proposed that he should be placed at the head of the finances, with the title of Comptroller General ; but his religion was an obstacle. This objection, however, he speedily removed by embracing the Roman Catholic religion, together with all his family, in December, 1719. On the 5th of January, 1720, he was declared Comptroller General ; an elevation which produced a new influx of flattery, both in prose and verse.

Law Comptroller General,  
Jan. 1720.

The brilliant and sudden success which had attended the execution of Law's scheme, seems to have inspired him with extravagant projects of ambition, and the English ambassador with, what must be considered, very natural apprehensions. In September 1719, Lord Stair thus writes to his

Apprehen-  
sions of  
Lord Stair.

1720. court : “ I come now to take notice of one thing to you, which, in my opinion, is very much to be minded, and that is the spirit, behaviour, and discourse of the man, whom from henceforth you must look upon as the first minister, and that is Mr. Law. He, in all his discourse, pretends he will set France much higher than ever she was before, and put her in a condition to give the law to all Europe ; that he can ruin the trade and credit of England and Holland whenever he pleases ; that he can break our bank whenever he has a mind, and our East India Company. He said publicly the other day, at his own table, when Lord Londonderry was present, that there was but one great kingdom in Europe, and one great town, and that was France, and Paris. He told Pitt that he would bring down our East India stock, and entered into articles with him to sell him, at twelve months hence, 100,000*l.* of stock, at 11 per cent. under the present current price. You may imagine what we have to apprehend from a man of this temper, who makes no scruple to declare such views, and who will have all the power and all the credit at this court.”

Stair wrote again on the 30th of April, 1720 : “ I am afraid our people of England think too neglectfully of Mr. Law’s schemes. I own to you that, as this kingdom is disposed, there is



great odds that it will miscarry; but it is not 1720.  
impossible, far from it, that it may hold long  
enough to do us a great deal of mischief. Another  
thing I dare be bold to say, it cannot succeed  
without undoing us; and if Mr. Law can compass  
our ruin, I think he is in a fair way to carry  
through his project in France. I know Mr. Law  
thinks so too; and that being the case, we may be  
very sure he will do us all the mischief in his  
power. You cannot think that power is small, considering  
the absolute authority he has acquired  
over the Regent."

Law was so confident of success at this time,  
that he said he would raise the nation so high,  
that every state in the world would send ambassadors  
to Paris, while the King of France would  
only send couriers in return.

Thus impressed with a notion of the danger  
that might arise to England from Law's success,  
Lord Stair never ceased to excite the Regent  
against him, by every insinuation he could imagine.  
The English ministry, however, finding Law  
firmly established in the mind of the Regent,  
disavowed their ambassador, and persuaded the  
French court that every vestige of ill-will yet subsisting  
between the two courts, was to be attributed  
to the unfavourable representations of Stair.\*

\* See Lettres de Madame.



1720. A pardon for the killing of Wilson (an equivocal kind of compliment), was sent over to Law. Earl Stanhope, when he came to Paris, said, that all Lord Stair had done was without any authority from his court, and even contrary to orders, and that he should be recalled. His recall actually took place soon afterwards; and one of the men to whose activity and vigilance the House of Brunswick owes its throne, was left for more than twenty years in retirement in Scotland, where he was obliged to put his estate in the hands of trustees, to pay off debts contracted during the period of his embassy. It is true, indeed, that when at Paris, he had made absurd and even insolent pretensions to honours which were not justly his due.

Decline of  
the System.

At the time, however, when Law had triumphed over all his enemies, and was realising a splendid fortune, the balloon which had carried him so high, began to descend as rapidly as it had risen. When the actions of the company were sold at the enormous sum of ten thousand livres, numbers of speculators, well acquainted with money transactions, imagining that the price could not last, converted all their stock into cash, and carried it off to foreign countries. Bourdon and La Richardiere, two famous stock-jobbers, remitted hundreds of thousands of *louis d'ors*, together with a quantity of diamonds, to England. A Mons.

Le Cevennois likewise carried his profits to Eng- 1720.  
land, and afterwards became famous in the trans-  
actions of the South Sea stock. One Vermalet  
having gained more than a million of livres, con-  
veyed them to Holland in a cart of hay and  
straw driven by himself. These transactions, and  
a latent mistrust of the wonder-working paper,  
caused a scarcity of specie in the kingdom. Law  
was called upon to provide for the difficulty. It  
seems to have been the mistake of this adventurer,  
to suppose that he could abolish the use of gold  
and silver, and carry on all the internal transactions  
of the country, in the paper of a mercantile com-  
pany, not exchangeable into any thing of intrinsic  
value. This theory he endeavoured to carry into  
effect, when, owing to the causes I have men-  
tioned, he found the quantity of specie diminish-  
ing: by several edicts issued in January, February, January to  
and March, 1720, he restricted the payments of March,  
the bank in specie to one hundred livres in gold, 1720.  
and ten in silver; the standard of the coin was  
frequently varied, while the bank notes were  
ordered to be received at five, and sometimes at  
ten per cent. above the specie. A measure of  
much more severe and arbitrary character was  
likewise adopted. In February 1720, an edict  
appeared prohibiting any persons from having in  
their possession more than five hundred livres in

1720. specie, under pain of a heavy fine, and confiscation of the sums found, with a reward of a fixed share to the informer. This edict produced suspicion and distrust among families, heaps of spies in the public, and alarm everywhere. M. Lambert, a President of the Parliament, came to the Regent and said, he knew a person who had more than the quantity of specie allowed. "M. Le President," cried the Regent, "how can you practise so infamous a trade?" "It is myself," answered the President: "I prefer one hundred thousand francs in coin, to all your notes." Many adopted his opinion without imitating his frankness. Only about one fifth of the specie supposed to be existing in France, was brought to the bank.

Union of  
the Bank  
and Com-  
pany.  
Feb. 1720.

In February 1720, a step of great importance was taken. The royal bank was incorporated with the company of the Indies; the state remained the guarantee of the notes of the bank, and none were to be issued without an order in council. The Regent at the same time gave up to the company all the profits of the bank since he had taken it into his hands, a step which, for a short period, raised the value of the actions of the company. At the period when this transfer was made, the amount of paper issued by the bank in circulation was 1,000,000,000. From the incorporation in February, to the 1st of May following, there were

fabricated notes for the value of 1,696,400,000 1720. livres, and in that month more than 2,200,000,000 of livres of the paper money of the bank were in circulation. With the facilities thus obtained, the conversion of the national debt was entirely accomplished, and all the ancient securities, forming the old debt of the state, were cancelled. It has been supposed that it was the intention of the Regent to have sold the shares of the company remaining in his hands to pay off the new debt. He still possessed 100,000 shares, which the company had agreed to take at 9000 livres each; he would thus have obtained 900 millions, a sum that would have paid off a large proportion of the public debt.

Before this could be done, however, the whole scheme was swept away. It was unfortunately discovered, that notes issued without stint, and supported by no substance, must lose in public estimation. An attempt indeed was made to give a forced value to the currency, by ordering that no payments whatever should be made in specie. M. Canillac, a profligate friend of the Regent, said to Law, "Your system is stolen from mine; I draw bills, and do not pay them, and so do you." In April, the distress of the finances was made manifest by an order for the reduction of the rentes to two and a half per cent. instead of five. In May, another edict appeared, which put an end

Arbitrary  
Measures.

Edict of  
May, 1720.

to the system. The paper of the company had accumulated, as we have seen, to an extraordinary degree. It was computed that there were in circulation about 2600 millions of livres of paper, and only 1300 millions of bullion. It was argued in the council that it was necessary, either to reduce the paper to an equality with the coin, or to raise the denomination of the coin to make it equal in value with the paper. Law opposed both these projects as needless and absurd; but of the two, he gave his preference to the latter. By the advice of D'Argenson and some other enemies of the system, the former was preferred, and an edict was issued, by which it was ordered that the actions of the company, and notes of the bank, should gradually diminish in value, till at the end of a year they should pass current for only one-half of their nominal worth.\*

It is impossible to conceive any thing more unwise, more fraudulent, or more villainous than this edict. If, as it appeared, the quantity of paper issued had caused a depreciation of the whole currency, the only just way of remedying the disorder was for the state gradually to withdraw the excess of the paper of the bank; or if fraud was so inherent in the French system of finance, that it was impossible to proceed without

\* Stewart, ii, 263. *Hist. du Systeme.*

it, the alteration of the standard of the coin opened 1720.  
an easy way for avoiding the difficulty. But the method adopted, while it was unjust and tyrannical in the extreme, was at the same time the extreme of imprudence; it stript the figure which the Regent had taken so much pains to adorn, and left the bare cheat, to be exposed to the eyes of the nation.

It is not matter of surprise, that the edict just mentioned should have occasioned indignation and affright among all classes. The Parliament, so often ready to become the organ of the popular voice, refused to register the edict, and made the strongest remonstrances on the subject: D'Argenson, who had shared with Law in the administration of the finances, was the victim of this storm; he was obliged to retire, and the obnoxious decree was withdrawn.

The attempt to revive a credit which had expired, however, could hardly succeed; the notes of the bank were now universally discredited, and the only effect of restoring their nominal value, was to enable some dishonest debtors to cheat their creditors. Among other victims, it is curious to find the name of Mr. Law. Having bought an estate of the President Novion, for four hundred thousand livres in gold, with a reserved right of redemption within a stated period, the son of the seller now



1720. availed himself of this clause, and put into the hands of Mr. Law four hundred thousand livres in his own depreciated paper.

Bank stops  
payment,  
May 1720.

On the 27th of May, the same day on which the former value was nominally restored to the paper, all value whatever was virtually taken from it by closing the bank, in order to stop the payment in specie of the bank notes.

When the very large amount of bank notes in circulation at the time the bank stopped payment, is considered, it may easily be conceived that the distress occasioned by this measure was extreme. In order to relieve in some degree the embarrassment of trade, an edict was issued, permitting all persons to have in their possession whatever sums in specie they thought proper, and a quantity of silver was sent to the commissaries to pay in change for small notes to those who had the most pressing occasion for supply. On the 10th of June the bank was opened for the payment of notes of ten livres each, and a day was appointed for exchanging notes of 100 livres into small notes. The bank being the only place where specie could be procured, the crowds which assembled there were immense, and scarcely a day passed without some persons being suffocated or crushed to death. On the 9th of July, the entrance to the bank on the side of the Mazarin gardens was so thronged,



that the guards, after admitting a small number, 1720.  
thought proper to shut the door. Those who  
were left on the outside, soon became clamorous,  
and began to throw stones into the gardens, which  
being resented by the soldiers, one of them fired  
his musket through the keyhole, killed one person, Fatal Ac-  
cidents.  
and wounded another. At length the gate was  
opened, but the guards were ranged in the inside  
with fixed bayonets, and of such as ventured within  
their reach several were wounded, and one run  
through the body. The 17th of the same month July 17th.  
was productive of still more fatal accidents. That  
day being appointed for the payment of notes of  
one hundred livres, so vast a crowd assembled,  
that no less than twenty persons were suffocated.  
This misfortune excited such indignation among  
the people, that they repaired in vast numbers to  
the Palais Royal, carrying with them three of the  
bodies of the persons who had been killed. The  
Regent immediately ordered the gates to be opened,  
and left the crowd to range unmolested in the vast  
courts of the Palace. Their fury soon began to  
spend itself; but Mr. Law's coachman, who was  
waiting at the door for his master to go home,  
being ordered to drive off, imprudently said, in the  
hearing of the mob, that they were a parcel of  
blackguards, and deserved to be hanged. This  
enraged the people so much, that they broke the

1720. carriage in pieces, the coachman hardly escaping with life. They then began to call out for Mr. Law; but Mons. Le Blanc, Secretary of State, coming out of the gate, harangued the multitude in a firm tone, and his advice, being seconded by a body of troops, was willingly taken by the crowd: they quietly dispersed, and the Regent ordered the three dead bodies to be decently buried. How different was this mob from those which seventy years afterwards appeared in the same place!

On the same day that this event took place, the Parliament had refused to register an edict, by which the exclusive privilege of all maritime commerce was vested in the company. This measure was so intolerable to the mercantile part of the community, that the Parliament counted on an effective support in their opposition to it, and they were not a little encouraged in this hope by the tumult which happened during their sitting.\* D'Aguesseau had now been recalled from exile, and made Keeper of the Seals. The Regent, in order

\* The First President of the Parliament showed the joy he felt at the success of the mob, in a manner not quite consistent with the gravity of his character. Happening to go to the door while the debate lasted, he there heard of the destruction of Law's carriage, upon which, returning to the company, he cried out,

Messieurs, Messieurs, bonne nouvelle,  
Le carrosse de Law est reduit en cannelle.

to signify to him clearly the purpose for which 1720.  
 he had been brought back, sent Law to fetch him  
 in his carriage from Fresne. When this great  
 man found how mighty a storm he had been  
 brought to allay, his love of power and his attach-  
 ment to the Parliament made him at once tremble  
 and hesitate. He reported to the Council the  
 opposition of the Parliament; and concluded by  
 saying, in a stammering manner, that in the present  
 sad conjuncture, he had only to rely on the pru-  
 dence and goodness of the Regent. The Duke of  
 Orleans then gave his opinion; and remarking that  
 the Parliament seemed to fan the flame of sedi-  
 tion, proposed they should be exiled to Blois. The  
 Council unanimously consented, but by the desire  
 of the Chancellor the place of exile was changed  
 to Pontoise. The sentence of banishment was con-  
 verted by the Parliament into a party of plea-  
 sure. Ladies of the first rank went from Paris to  
 attend great dinners, at which the President of the  
 Parliament presided; after dinner the magistrates  
 took an airing, and the evening was finished by  
 cards, dice, and supper, at which all the judges  
 assisted. The road of Pontoise came to be not less  
 frequented than that of Versailles had been.\*

Banish-  
 ment of the  
 Parlia-  
 ment.

In the mean time the system was exhibiting  
 fresh symptoms of decay. In order to withdraw

\* Duclos.

1720. some of the paper of the bank, there were created 25 millions of livres of perpetual annuities at two and a half per cent., and afterwards 8 millions at two per cent., and four millions of life annuities at four per cent. The unfavourable nature of these terms made many hesitate in parting with their bank notes; upon which, on the 15th of August, an edict was issued, declaring that the notes of ten thousand and one thousand livres should have no currency, except for the purchase of annuities and bank accounts, or for the payment of instalments still due on the actions of the company. At length, in October, appeared the edict which struck a death-blow to the whole system. By this edict, the notes were deprived of all value after the 1st of November.\*

Fall of the  
System.

Oct. 24. With regard to the company, it was ordered that a list of all the original proprietors should be made out: that those who still possessed the actions for which they had subscribed, should place them in deposit with the company; and that those who had not retained their number of shares should

\* Many who neglected to exchange their notes in the interval, or hoped for a favourable turn, kept their notes, which remained in their families for a long time after. When the assignats were issued in 1790, a person was observed in the garden of the Tuileries with a crowd about him: he turned out to be a man opening a parcel which contained 100,000 livres of Law's bank notes.

complete them by purchasing of the company at 1720. the rate of 13,500 livres a share. This new act of iniquity naturally caused great alarm among the original holders of shares, many of whom took immediate steps for leaving the kingdom. Upon this, an order appeared to prohibit any one from quitting France, without permission from the Regent, under pain of death. Dwelling-houses were searched for sums acquired by the late stock-jobbing. Jewels to the amount of two millions being found in the house of M. Du Pin, one of the Secretaries to the King, he was sent to the Bastille, in vain protesting that he ought not to be treated as a criminal for doing what the state had sanctioned. Many persons were arrested on the frontiers with money concealed about their persons.

The whole plan of Law being now given up, the great farms, the management of the revenue and the mint, were taken from the India company, who were thus reduced to a mere trading body.

When the total amount of the public debt came to be ascertained, it was found to amount, on the 1st day of January, 1721, including the shares of the India company, to the vast sum of 3,189,401,705 capital, and more than 99 millions of interest. In order to reduce a debt which it was thought impossible to face, Commissioners were appointed by the usual name of Visa, to examine the state of

Reduction  
of the Pub-  
lic Debt.  
Jan. 1721.

1720. all the paper outstanding. They were directed to range all the creditors of the state in five classes, the four first comprehending all who had bought their securities with real effects, the last consisting of those who could give no satisfactory account of themselves. Deductions were to be made from the demands of the four first classes; the securities of persons of the fifth class were to be totally annihilated. The consequence of this last clause was, that actions of the company, which cost 13,500 livres, were sold for a single *louis d'or*. The Commissioners immediately began their labours, and in consequence of their report, the future interest to be paid by the state was reduced to about 56 millions of livres; an operation by which the creditors of the state were in fact robbed of upwards of 40 millions of livres a year.

Adventures  
of Law.

The reader may perhaps be curious to know something of the personal fate of Law. When he found himself becoming unpopular, he took refuge in the Palais Royal, where he had apartments assigned him by the Regent. As the paper fell, his name became extremely odious to the people of Paris, of which a ridiculous instance is given. A hackney coachman who was fallen upon by a gentleman and his servants, called out, "Here is Law going to murder me!" upon which the mob



so effectually took his part, that the gentleman 1720. was glad to escape with his life.

In December, Law finding the current of indignation setting in still more strongly against him, resigned all his offices, and requested permission to retire to one of his country seats. It is said that at his last interview with the Duke of Orleans, he addressed him in these words, "I acknowledge that I have committed great faults; I did so, because I am a man, and all men are liable to err; but I declare to your Royal Highness that none of them proceeded from wickedness or dishonesty, and that nothing of the kind will be found in the whole course of my conduct."

Two or three days after Law had left Paris he received a note from the Duke of Bourbon, expressed in the kindest manner, informing him that the Regent permitted him to leave the kingdom, and had ordered him passports, offering him at the same time any money he might require. Law accepted the passports, but declined the money. A day or two afterwards he set out for Brussels in a post-chaise belonging to Madame de Prie, the mistress of the Duke of Bourbon, escorted by six horse-guards of the Duke.

When the departure of Law was known, various sentiments agitated the nation. Some re-



1720. joiced that the kingdom was rid of so dangerous an empiric; others wished he had been retained to make atonement for the suffering he had caused; others again regretted his departure, thinking that the man who had woven the web, was the only one able to unravel it. At the Council of State, an altercation took place between the Regent and the Duke of Bourbon: each accused the other of being the most concerned for the safety of Law, while the council were perhaps not displeased that Princes, who so seldom hear the truth, should in their turn have to listen to censures and reproaches.

Dec. 16.  
1720.

The conduct of Law in the season of his prosperity had been magnificently expensive, and prodigally generous. When, upon his conversion, he was made honorary churchwarden of the parish of St. Roch, he gave 500,000 livres towards completing the church. He distributed another sum of 500,000 livres among the English at St. Germain, whose pensions had been suppressed. There having been found great difficulty on a particular occasion in obtaining fish for Lent, he ordered several ship-loads of the finest, and the ships not arriving till Easter Eve, he distributed the whole gratuitously among the Mendicant Friars. His presents to hospitals and churches of all kinds, as well as to distressed individuals, were on the grandest scale. Finding that a lady had lost

100,000 livres in one of the crowds assembled to see him pass, he immediately replaced the whole sum from his own shares.

In the disposal of the large sums which he reserved for himself, Law had vested the whole amount in landed estates in France, a strong proof of his thorough belief in the success of his plan. The entire sum so laid out, with the purchase-money of a library and of the place of *Secrétaire du Roi*, did not quite amount to 10 millions of livres. Soon after his departure from France, the whole of his property was seized and confiscated, including an annuity of 200,000 livres on the lives of Lady Catharine Law and her children, for which 5 millions of livres had been paid, and in contradiction to a special edict, by which it had been declared that this sum should never be liable to confiscation for any cause whatever.

Mr. Law stayed but a short time at Brussels; he was at Venice in January 1721, during the Carnival, and is said to have had an interview there with the celebrated Cardinal Alberoni, then, like himself, a minister in disgrace. It was even affirmed that the Pretender had made a journey to Venice on purpose to see him. But while received every where with the greatest attentions, and accompanied in all places by rumours of immense wealth, he was obliged to get himself in-

1720. scribed a Roman citizen, in order to avoid his creditors, it being a privilege of that title to be exempted from arrest, except by one of their own body. But his creditors having assigned their debts to a Roman citizen likewise, he went to Copenhagen, where he received an invitation from the English Ministry to return to his native country. He accordingly embarked on board the flag ship of Sir John Norris, commanding the Baltic squadron. Upon his arrival in England, Lord Coningsby complained in the House of Lords, that one who had renounced his country and his religion, should be brought over by the Admiral; but after some discussion the subject was allowed to drop. After this, Law continued to reside some years in England. At one time he had hopes of being reinstated in his post in France, but his expectations were totally blasted by the death of the Regent, his original patron; and he was finally reduced to the lingering misery of memorials. In one of these papers he thus skilfully vindicates his own integrity at the expense of the rest of the world. "I had it in my power to have settled my daughter in marriage in the first houses of Italy, Germany, and England, but I refused all offers of that nature, thinking it inconsistent with my duty to, and affection for the state in whose service I had the honour to be en-

gaged. I do not assume to myself any merit 1720. from this conduct, and I never so much as spoke upon the subject to the Regent. But I cannot help observing, that this mode of conduct is diametrically opposite to the idea my enemies wish to impress of me; and surely all Europe ought to have a good opinion of my disinterestedness, and of the condition to which I am reduced, since I no longer receive any proposals of marriage for my children.”\*

About the year 1725, Mr. Law finally left England and settled at Venice, where he died in 1729, in a state but little removed from want. His brother, William Law, after being fifteen months confined in prison for affairs connected with the company, lived till 1752, when he likewise died poor. John Law left only one son, who died unmarried, but the descendants of William Law distinguished themselves in the French service, and one of them is still to be found in high station both in the army and the court. Political writers have been very much divided on the question of the merits of Law: while the greater number have laughed at him as an empiric, or inveighed against him as a swindler, some have praised his intentions, and argued that his plan would have succeeded had he been allowed to retain the sole di-

\* Hist. of Cramond.

1720. rection of it. A calm review, at this distance of time, may perhaps convince us that the faults of Law were indeed enormous, but that they arose neither from incapacity nor dishonesty, but were the fruits of a heated imagination, an over-sanguine temper, and a miscalculation of the nature and effects of credit.

Review of  
the System.

With regard to the original conception of the plan, a great part of it at least, seems to have been rational and practicable. Law found France weighed down by an overwhelming debt, and the state defrauded by the farmers of the taxes, who acquired enormous fortunes by oppressing the people, and overreaching the government. In these circumstances he proposed to found a great trading company, which should enjoy advantageous privileges in commerce, and farm the whole revenue. The subscriptions to this company were to be destined to pay off the debt of the state, which thenceforth would become debtor to the company, and pay to it one uniform regular interest. At the same time a banking company was to issue notes that would facilitate credit, and increase the circulation of the country. So far all was plausible. But in the original conception of the plan, or in the additions made to it in the intoxication of unexpected success, four great defects are to be observed. 1st. Law overlooked

the appalling fact, that the value of the actions of 1720. the company, and the paper of the bank, depended on the will of a despotic government. Hence, all his comparisons of France to England and Holland failed ; a profligate Prince or ignorant administration had it in their power at any moment to destroy the whole value of the paper by a breath ; and it was easy to see that credit, once shaken, could never again be made steadfast. 2nd. It was a great mistake to unite the company of the Indies with the bank ; the two things are in their nature distinct ; a trading company is a speculation which runs the risk of profit or loss ; a banking company, which furnishes the currency of a nation, ought to be secure from all hazard ; its safety depends on its being always provided with means to meet its outstanding debts. 3rd. It was likewise a great mistake to allow the government to be a party to a company which was to revive credit. The requisites of a merchant are patience, frugality, industry, integrity ; the characteristics of the French government were improvidence, extravagance, and dishonesty. 4th. The attempt to supersede the use of coin, was made without due consideration. Some means must be afforded of measuring the value of a paper currency ; and the best yet discovered, is the facility of converting it into coin.

1720. To these faults in the conception, were added many others in the execution of the system. The mad infatuation of the public was first excited, and afterwards turned to account, in a manner, of which a reputable merchant would have been ashamed. But when the shame had been incurred, the delusion might have been made profitable. If the Regent had sold a large number of shares when their price was at the highest, the greater part of the capital of the debt would have reverted into his hands. It has been estimated that 80 millions, payable as interest of the national debt, would have been reduced to 8. But instead of this sagacious measure, the Regent, by the advice of his council, issued the disastrous edict of the 21st of May. The argument used in favour of that measure was, that there were at that time in circulation twice as many millions of paper as there were of coin. The advocates of the system have very reasonably asked, "What then?" In fact, a more ridiculous reason could not be given. But it is probable that these reasoners did not know the strength of their own cause; the truth was, that the superabundant quantity of paper was causing the coin to go out of circulation, and in a short time would have carried it all out of France. But a remedy for this evil would have been found, either in raising the denomination of



the coin, according to the usual fraudulent practice, or in withdrawing a certain quantity of the paper, or both. Even after the measure adopted was taken, good faith and regularity would still have preserved the system. Money still bore an interest under 3 per cent.; and a regular payment of the interest due on the debt would have maintained the credit of the bank. But the system had by this time fallen into the guardianship of its enemies, and their object was to strangle it as soon as possible. 1720.

Upon the whole, Law must be esteemed a visionary indeed, but richly endowed both with sagacity and genius. If he failed in dragging France out of the pit into which she had fallen, it is to be attributed not so much to the faults of his own scheme, which might have been repaired by skill and discretion, as to the constitution of the French government, and the opposition made to his administration, by those who ought to have supported him. What Law might have done, if uncontrolled, is still therefore a problem of difficulty: let us now pass to the effects of what was done.

I have mentioned, that many persons increased their fortune in a prodigious manner by the system of Law. Among these, the nobility, and especially that part of them immediately attached to the court, were most conspicuous. Not above

Fortunes  
of Individuals.

1720. three persons of this rank could be mentioned who had not gambled in actions. The Prince of Deux Ponts, the Dukes of Guiche and Antin, Louvigni, d'Etrées, and the Prince of Rohan, were singularly favoured by fortune. The Duke of La Force greatly augmented his property by dealing in spices, porcelain, &c.; and a long trial took place in the Parliament, to ascertain whether he had not thereby forfeited his title to the peerage. A caricature was made of him in the character of a porter, with immense bales of goods on his shoulders, and the inscription, "*Admirez la Force.*" A Mr. Gage, brother of the first Viscount Gage, made such immense profits, that he offered the King of Poland three millions sterling to resign his crown, and upon his refusal entered into a negotiation to purchase the sovereignty of Sardinia.\* Upon him were written Pope's well known lines:

The crown of Poland, venal twice an age,  
To just three millions stinted modest Gage.

He was supposed, at one time, to have been possessed of six millions sterling, but the fall of the system reduced him at once to want. He afterwards entered into the service of Spain, and under the name of Count Gage, makes a figure in the future history of Europe: he ended by becoming a Spanish grandee.

\* Lodge's Peerage of Ireland, v. 220.

Of all the speculators, stock-jobbers, and gamblers, however, concerned in these transactions, none was more fortunate than the Duke of Bourbon. His dealings were so successful, that he was enabled to rebuild Chantilly in a style of magnificence that long made it the admiration of Europe. The stables especially, which yet remain, are splendid beyond measure. The Duke, it is said, imported from England, at one time, no less than 150 of the best blood horses he could procure. He bought a great extent of landed property, particularly in Picardy, where he became possessed of almost the whole country situated between the Oise and the Somme.\* One of his friends, however, had the courage to tell him how the world considered riches procured by such means. When the Duke was one day displaying the number of actions of the company of which he was possessed, Turmenies, who was on the most intimate terms with him, alluding to the battles of Rocroy and Nordlinghen, said, "Sir, two actions performed by your grandfather were worth all those." Yet the great Condé, who left an imperishable name, was obliged, every time he went out, to walk between two rows of his creditors, who besieged his door for payment; while the Duke of Bourbon, known only by his vices and bad temper, acquired and

1720.  
The Duke  
of Bourbon.

\* Vie de P. d'Orleans, ii. 38.

1720. enjoyed immense wealth. So blind is fortune in her gifts!

Corporations and religious communities took advantage of the system, as well as individuals. The states of Brittany, the clergy, the jesuits, and the municipalities of the small towns, all reduced their debts by selling small portions of land at immense nominal prices: an estate which had before yielded 4000 livres of rent, sold for 600,000 livres. \*

General  
result of  
the Sys-  
tem.

Upon the whole, the system of Law, as it was practically carried into effect, was productive of some good, but of great mischief. If some of the higher nobility were enabled to repair their wasted patrimony, and to shine with new splendour at Court; if some impulse was given to trade and commerce by the abundance of capital thrown into the market; if the national debt was diminished, and the taxes lightened in proportion, there were grave inconveniences, on the other side, to be set against these advantages. A general uncertainty was introduced into all transactions concerning property. The tradesman did not know what price to set upon his goods; the merchant was not sure to what countries he might send his cargo; the landed proprietor was uncertain of the value of his own fortune, and that of his children. Men and women of all ranks, of the most sober

\* Vie de P. d'Orleans, ii. 46.

habits and the most steady reputation, caught the 1720. habits and character of gamblers; to gain suddenly, to spend profusely, to neglect honest occupation, to forfeit solemn engagements, to forget the ties of blood and the duties of morality in the dream of a prodigious fortune, to be acquired without talent or labour, were no longer the peculiar features of men addicted to a particular vice, but the qualities of a great part of the nation. Ambition inspired all, from the prince to the footman; avarice and luxury walked hand in hand, misleading the people; and it was long before the greedy hopes and extravagant profusion created by the scheme of Law, were carried away by the tide of time. Nay, it has been said by those who witnessed the change, that a permanent evil was produced by this scheme: that the love of honour of the soldier, the love of fame of the man of letters, the desire of respect of the judge, and the attention to character of the merchant, were henceforth effaced by an inordinate passion for gain.\* We may at all events lay it down as a certain rule, that the tendency of any similar system is to diminish the force of frugality, patience, and perseverance, to unsettle the social habits, and to set loose, in all their violence, those passions which excite in men a vehement desire of wealth, to the

\* Duclos, t. ii.

1718. entire forgetfulness of honour, benevolence, and justice in private, of patriotism, freedom, and integrity in public life.

I have thought it necessary to be thus particular in the account of the scheme of Law, as it affords a curious view of manners and characters, as well as of some very interesting questions in finance. We shall now return to the relation of events, many of which took place during the progress of the system.

Conspiracy  
of  
Cellamare.

The Duchess of Maine bore with impatience and indignation the deprivation of rank which her husband, of a less ambitious temper, would speedily have forgotten. Two or three men, of intriguing character, availed themselves of this disposition to frame a very imprudent conspiracy, into which she entered, rather from restlessness of temper, than from deficiency of judgment. This plot, as far as the Duchess was concerned, seems to have consisted in declarations, manifestos, state papers, in short, all that a plot ought not to consist of, and to have been totally wanting in men, money, and every other means of effecting the object in view. It was agreed that the King of Spain should write a letter, desiring that the States General of the kingdom might be assembled; and should this object be attained, the Regency was to be taken from the Duke of Orleans and given to

Philip the Fifth. To ensure the execution of 1718. such a plan, means were to be devised for previously carrying off the Regent, and confining him in Spain; but how this measure was to be effected, seems not to have been clearly arranged. The Count of Laval, the Marquess of Pompadour, the Cardinal de Polignac, one of the negotiators of the treaty of Utrecht, and Malesieux, a man of science, appear to have been the chief confederates of the Duchess of Maine, in her paper plot. There were other persons implicated, at the same time, in separate criminal correspondence with Cellamare; the most important among them was the Duke of Richlieu, a young and frivolous man of fashion, who had been so guilty as to offer to deliver up Bayonne, where he was commandant, to the Spanish troops. Magni, who introduced ambassadors to the court, and was fit for nothing more, was another contriver of this miserable affair.

The government for some time slept in security. It is affirmed that a notice of the conspiracy was received from England, but nothing sufficiently precise to enable the Regent to fix upon the persons engaged in it. Various accounts have been given of the manner in which the plot was finally detected. The most common is, that a secretary of Cellamare imprudently confided to a courtesan, in the house of La Fillon, a celebrated procuress,



1718. that he had been prevented going to see her by the quantity of business he had been obliged to transact, in consequence of the departure of a confidential person for Madrid; and that La Fillon, the mistress of the house, who was well acquainted with the Abbé Dubois, immediately informed him of the confessions of the Secretary.\* Another account, and a more authentic one, says, that a clerk in the King's library, of the name of Buvat, was employed to write for Cellamare, and revealed the secret to Dubois.† What is certain, is, that the Abbé Portocarrero, nephew of the Cardinal of that name, and Monteleon, son of the Spanish Ambassador in England, two young men of pleasure, were entrusted by Cellamare with all the papers concerning the plot in which he was engaged, and were arrested on their journey at Poitiers.‡ The messenger arrived with the packet of letters just as the Regent was going to the Opera. Dubois examined the parcel, and informed

December.

\* Voltaire.

† *Vie privée du C. Dubois. Mémoires Secrets du C. Dubois.*

‡ The author of the life of the Regent says, that the travellers were overturned at Poitiers, and that their anxiety to save their portmanteau, caused their arrest. But had this been the case, the Regent would not have made a mystery of the matter to his mother. See *Mémoires de Madame.*

the Regent generally of their contents on his re- 1718.  
turn. Any other Prince would have been agitated by such a discovery, and would have lost no time in learning the designs, and the names of his enemies. But the Regent, already become torpid by indulgence, preferred going to his supper society; and according to his usual habit, from that moment the doors were shut against all business, however great the urgency might be. Dubois did not fail to profit by this circumstance; he, of course, wished to preserve the life and power of the Regent; but he was not sorry to gain a title of recommendation with his enemies in case of reverse, and to attribute to the credit of his own intercession, the mercy which the Regent gave from inclination. In the mean time Cellamare had got notice of the seizure by a servant of Portocarrero, who rode back with all speed to Paris. In consequence of this circumstance, and the negligence of Dubois, he gained sixteen hours to destroy his papers; and on the following morning he went composedly to the house of Le Blanc, Secretary of State, and claimed the dispatches, which he said had no doubt been taken by mistake. But at the house of Le Blanc he found the Abbé Dubois, who informed him that his letters had been read, and communicated to him an official order he had obtained to examine all his other papers.

1718. The papers seized at Poitiers, when examined, were found to contain draughts of letters intended to be written by Philip the Fifth, to the Parliament, an address from the nobility, asking him to assume the Regency, and lists of persons ready to take employment under him. Two of the letters were published by the Regent for his justification; the other papers were spread by the conspirators themselves to excite a ferment. The discovery of the plot excited, of course, great alarm among all persons any way implicated. An Abbé Brigaut, a man of the worst character, who had boasted to his friends, that if he were taken he would stand as long a siege in the Bastille as Charles the XIIth had done at Bender, was arrested, and confessed all he knew. The Duchess of Maine was sitting at cards when a M. Chatillon, a very heavy dull man, said, "There is a piece of news which is very laughable. They have taken a certain Abbé Bri—Bri—;" at last he recollected the name and continued: "What is diverting is, that he has told all." "Indeed!" said the Duchess of Maine, "that is very amusing." "Oh! it is enough to make one die of laughing," said M. Chatillon: "imagine all these persons so careful to keep their secrets, and this man names them every one." And he then burst into a laugh, in which the company declined to join.

The Abbé Brigaut had confided his papers to a Chevalier Du Mesnil, telling him they contained only his will. Du Mesnil, upon the discovery of the plot, opened the papers, and finding many persons implicated in a conspiracy, destroyed them. Nor would he acknowledge he had received them till the Abbé Brigaut had confessed the fact. A certain Marquis Du Mesnil went to the Regent to disavow any relationship with his namesake. "Then I am sorry for you," said the Regent, "for he is a man of spirit and of honour."\*

What is remarkable in this affair is, the singular moderation and clemency of the Regent. Although the plot was certainly directed against his authority, probably against his life, and more than sixty of the persons about the court were said to be implicated in it, he showed no inclination to punish his enemies. Cellamare was conducted to the frontier, and a letter was addressed to foreign powers, justifying the violation of the law of nations, rendered necessary in this case. The Duke and Duchess of Maine were confined separately; several of their household, and some of their partizans were likewise arrested for the sake of precaution; the Duke of Richlieu was imprisoned in the Bastille. But when Dubois, with a list of the

Clemency  
of the Re-  
gent.

\* Madame de Stael. The account of Du Mesnil by this lady is, however, said by Duclos to be partial.

1718. conspirators in his hand, was about to read it to the Council, the Regent stopped him, and said, "The council would be surprised to hear the names of several persons who are under obligation to me, but I will not put them to the pain of asking for a pardon, and I am satisfied that this conduct will make them return to their duty."\* As this clemency did not proceed from fear or want of power, it produced a due effect, and the Regency was no more disturbed by conspiracies. There is no quality of a government which so much conciliates affection, as mercy properly exercised; none that so much exposes it to contempt, as impunity inopportunately suffered. Yet the difference consists less in the acts performed, than in the men who perform them; rulers who are feared may pardon with safety, where rulers who fear cannot do so without danger: for the people who worship the generosity which grants, trample upon the timidity which recedes. For this reason, a strong government is often more merciful than a weak one.

Having given due praise to the firmness of the Regent, we must now record his weakness. The imprisonment of the Duke of Richlieu occupied the heads and hearts of all the women of rank in

\* Vie de Phil. d'Orleans, i. 347.

Paris. Brought to court when he was yet a boy, 1713.  
 he had made himself remarked by the beauty of The Duke  
 his figure, and the easy grace of his manners; in of Richlieu.  
 a short time he was celebrated for his numerous and  
 successful gallantries. His favourite pleasure was  
 to supplant the great men of the court; and the  
 Regent, more than once, found himself defeated in  
 his amours by this presumptuous young man. One  
 day the Cardinal Dubois finding him with one of  
 his mistresses, complained violently of his conduct:  
 Richlieu coolly replied, "Give me your list, then,  
 and I will respect it." When confined for the con-  
 spiracy of Cellamare, he was rather pleased than  
 otherwise at the importance he acquired by being  
 treated as a criminal of state. He walked on the  
 terrace of the Bastille with his hair frizzed, and in  
 a coat covered with gold lace, making signs to the  
 ladies, who came in crowds in their carriages, and  
 made the road joining the Bastille their favourite  
 promenade.\* He amused himself at the same time  
 with having his favourite mistresses painted in the  
 costume of nuns; Mademoiselle de Charolais, sis-  
 ter of the Duke of Bourbon, was represented as a  
 recollet, others as capuchins.† The Regent, who  
 said at first that he had sufficient evidence to cut

\* Mémoires de Madame, 133.

† Mémoires de Madame, 134.

1719. off four heads, if Richlieu had as many, could not resist the levity and gaiety of this conduct, and he allowed the Cardinal de Noailles, his uncle, to carry him off to his country house at Conflans. He was afterwards sent further from Paris ; but at length, his full pardon was obtained in a somewhat curious manner. Among other intrigues Richlieu had seduced Mdle. de Valois, daughter of the Regent, who was passionately in love with him ; the Regent wished his daughter to marry the Duke of Modena ; she obstinately refused for a long time, and at length only consented on the condition that Richlieu should be entirely pardoned. Such were the weights thrown into the scales of justice during the Regency !

Nobles of  
Brittany.

The nobles of Brittany who had been involved in the plots of Alberoni, having no court beauties to intercede for them, were not so mildly dealt with. Four were publicly executed, and several more banished from France. As they had engaged to rise upon the appearance of a Spanish fleet on the coast, it is impossible to dispute the justice of their sentence. Yet their discontent had a natural and excusable origin. The states of Brittany had demanded the accounts of Montaran, their treasurer. Nothing was more just. But Montaran had a brother, who, being a captain of the guards,



and a favourite in the society of Paris, interested 1719.  
several women of rank in the insolvency of the  
treasurer, and the states were denied their just  
petition.\* Hence a discontent, which many little  
slights fomented into rebellion.

Among those who had offered their services to  
Spain was De Mesmes, first President of the Par-  
liament. Anxious to ascertain whether his intrigues  
had been discovered, he employed the agency of  
Mdlle. de Chausseraye to obtain an audience of  
the Regent. The interview took place in her  
presence. The first President began with protest-  
ing his unalterable fidelity to the Regent: the Re-  
gent made no answer. De Mesmes thinking he  
was not discovered, renewed his protestations and  
asseverations. He was about to retire, when the  
Regent coolly presented to him a letter, by which  
he answered to the King of Spain for the Parlia-  
ment. The President fell at the feet of the Prince,  
who giving him a glance of indignation, passed into  
the other room. He might perhaps have been  
treated with severity, had not Mdlle. de Chausse-  
raye followed the Regent, and skilfully suggested,  
how useful it would be to him to have a President  
of the Parliament in his power, whom he might  
always govern, by keeping him between hope and

\* Duclos, ii. 32.

1719. fear. The first President was not molested, and afterwards sold himself again at the price of a man of character.\*

Madame  
de Main-  
tenon.

Early in the year 1719 died Madame de Maintenon. From the time of the late King's death, she had lived in total retirement at St. Cyr, superintending the education of the seminary she had founded, and probably enjoying, as far as her age would permit, more happiness than when she had been tormented by the thorns of ambition. During the last years of her life, she scarcely saw any stranger but the widow of James the Second, who sometimes came to dine with her: the ceremonial of two arm chairs, to show that both were Queens, though one had only reigned a few months, and the other not at all, is a singular relic of human vanity amid the ostentation of humility. When the Czar Peter came to France, he went from curiosity to pay a visit to St. Cyr: Madame de Maintenon, to avoid the difficulties of etiquette, received him in her bed. The Czar was offended, and asked her, through his interpreter, what was her illness; Madame de Maintenon replied, "Extreme old age." Peter opened the curtains, stared at her for some time, and went away. The letters of Madame de Maintenon have been published,

\* Duclos, ii. 31.

and give some curious information respecting the 1719.  
times in which she lived. They are well written ;  
but the prudence and reserve of her character,  
forbade her to unbosom herself with that open-  
hearted ease, which is the first charm of familiar  
letters. One large portion is occupied in corres-  
pondence with persons of the court ; another in  
directions for the convents which she superin-  
tended ; taken together they show a greater resem-  
blance between these two modes of life than might  
at first have been supposed : the tedium, littleness,  
and monotony of the court ; the envy, jealousy,  
and ambition of the convent.

In the summer of the same year died a very dif-  
ferent person ; the Duchess of Berry, daughter of  
the Regent. From her childhood to her marriage  
she had shown evident signs of wilfulness and  
pride ; from her marriage to her death she had  
joined to these qualities an unbounded licentious-  
ness. At the commencement of the Regency she  
had paraded through Paris with trumpets and  
cymbals, an honour only granted to the reigning  
sovereign. This display however was not allowed  
to be repeated ; and another pretension, equally  
absurd, was defeated by the firmness of the diplo-  
matic body. She succeeded however in obtaining  
a guard of honour, and by the decision of the

Duchess  
of Berry.  
1719.

1719. Regent took precedence of her mother ; a privilege which she used with the greatest haughtiness, scarcely ever paying her mother a visit, and making her feel that pride which the Duchess of Orleans was fond of displaying to others. With this exceeding arrogance of birth, the Duchess of Berry joined the lowest and most disgusting vices. Early in her career she formed an attachment to La Haye, an inferior officer in the household of her husband ; afterwards, during the Regency, she was a principal person at the suppers of the Regent, which were often held at her own palace of the Luxemburg. Here this proud Princess gave way to the most disgusting debauch, in company with the vilest and most dissolute of the bad company of Paris. Her father's attachment to her was so tender, and so blind, that the malignity of the world failed not to give it a character of criminality, which perhaps it never assumed. The last serious passion of the Duchess of Berry was excited by the Count of Riom. Riom, in concert with a Madame de Mouchy, a lady of the household to whom he was attached, governed the Princess completely ; he dictated her most trifling actions, and even prescribed her dress, forcing her to change it after it was put on, and always directing that which he knew she disliked. The Princess cried, but always obeyed. Riom, it is said, acted by the

advice of Lauzun, his uncle, who had found by 1719.  
experience, that when a woman is passionately in  
love, the worst treatment only contributes to rivet  
her affection. To the two apparently incompat-  
ible qualities of pride and debauch, the Duchess  
of Berry joined a third, no less extraordinary,  
namely, devotion. She used to retire for whole  
days to the convent of the Carmelite nuns, where  
she wept, fasted, and prayed with all the fervour  
of a Magdalen. A pious nun seeing her appar-  
ently so contrite, exclaimed with astonishment and  
rapture, "Good God! madam, is it possible the  
world can talk so scandalously of you! what a  
wicked world it is! I am sure you live here like a  
saint!" The Princess smiled, and returned to her  
palace, where in the hours of her orgies she re-  
counted this trait of the pious simplicity of the  
carmelite.\*

A singular scene occurred a short time before  
the death of the Duchess of Berry. She was de-  
livered of a daughter, and after her confinement,  
which she tried to keep secret, was taken seriously  
ill. Languet, the *curé* of St. Sulpice, went to her  
house and told the Regent, who was there, that  
she must be prepared for receiving the sacrament,  
and that in the first place the Count de Riom and  
Madame de Mouchy must be dismissed. The Re-

\* Duclos, t. ii.

1719. gent in despair sent for the Cardinal de Noailles, who, when he arrived, was no less obstinate than the *curé*; and on the hesitation of the Regent, indignantly declared that if the father would not speak to his daughter, he would do so himself. The Regent in consternation then entered the room; but as soon as he began to explain his mission, the Duchess burst forth into invectives against the insolence of the bigots, and his weakness in listening to them. The Cardinal was unable to obtain admittance, but the *curé* watched the door with two of his brethren for two days and two nights, till the Princess was out of danger. When recovered, Riom prevailed upon her to consent to a secret marriage.\*

Soon after this the Princess caught an illness by exposing herself to the night air in giving a supper to her father at Meudon, and after a few days died at La Muette, in the Bois de Boulogne. She is said to have shown great piety and resignation in her last moments. Her daughter by Riom was afterwards a nun at Pontoise.

Count  
Horn.

Towards the end of the career of Law a murder was committed in Paris, remarkable both from its connexion with the history of the times, and from the rank of one of the criminals. A younger brother of the illustrious family of Horn, whose

\* Duclos. St. Simon.

mother was a daughter of the Prince of Ligne, 1720. after passing through every kind of profligacy, had arrived at the last stage of moral depravity at the early age of two and twenty. In concert with Mille, a half-pay captain, and Lestang, the son of a Flemish banker, he planned the murder of one of the rich stock-jobbers of the day. Pretending to bargain for actions, these men enticed their victim into a cabaret in the Rue de Venise, where they stabbed him. A waiter of the house going into the room saw a man bathed in blood, and instantly locking the door ran out to give the alarm. Lestang, who was on the staircase, made off to their common lodging, and escaped, taking with him their most portable effects. Mille got into the street, but was followed, and soon taken. Horn himself was stopped getting out of the window. He had presence of mind enough to say that he had narrowly escaped being assassinated in defending the murdered man; but unfortunately for him, Mille, on his apprehension, had confessed all.

Now began the solicitations from the relations of the Count, to obtain, if not his pardon, at least a commutation of the sentence of the wheel for some other punishment less infamous. They represented that no daughter of the family of Horn could be received into any chapter after such a disgrace to the third generation. But the Regent was



1720. inexorable. When the relations spoke of the shame, he said, in the sense of a verse of Corneille, that the disgrace lay in the crime, and not in the punishment. When they told him that Count Horn was related to him through his mother; he said, " Well, then, I will take my share of the disgrace, and that may console the other relations." Yet not to rate his justice too high, it must be said, that his firmness on this subject was chiefly owing to Law, who, while the system lasted, was anxious for the security of all persons who carried their fortunes in their pockets.

When all hope of favour was lost, two of the noble relations of the Count found means to penetrate into the prison, and offer him poison, which, however, he refused; whereupon they left him with indignation, saying, " Go, wretch, you are only fit to die by the hands of the executioner!" He might have replied, that they were more anxious for their honour than for his; and that a voluntary death, while it deprived him of all chance of pardon, was enjoined by no duty to God or man. The two criminals were executed on the 21st March. Before the execution, and when upon the wheel, Horn asked pardon of his accomplice, which seems to imply that he was the contriver of the murder. But while all Paris was

March  
1720.

moved at the fate of Horn, no one cared for the 1720.  
destiny of a half-pay captain.

The day after the perpetration of the crime, a gentleman arrived at Paris charged by the elder brother of the Count, with orders to pay his debts, and with the means of obliging him to leave France. A day, or even an hour, sooner or later, determines the guilt or innocence, the misery or the fortune of man. \*

In the spring of 1720, the ancient and opulent town of Marseilles was visited by a dreadful calamity. A vessel coming from Syria, unknowingly brought the plague among its crew; the merchandize was landed, and the time of quarantine abridged in an ignorant and dangerous security.

The  
Plague at  
Marseilles.  
1720.

Soon the Plague broke forth in the town. The government, with its usual precaution, ordered the port to be shut. At first the inhabitants complained of the needless interruption of their commerce: presently their minds were absorbed by the terror of the advancing desolation. The evil was the more formidable from the want of foresight and preparation: the rich had no other defence than flight, the poor had no alternative but plague or famine. The parliament of Aix inclosed the town and a small space round it with a cordon of

\* St. Simon. Duclos.

1720. safety; the miserable inhabitants sought to avoid each other, and failed: thus losing the benefit of mutual succour, without obtaining the advantage of separation. In their vague fear some fled to the sea, and others sought the streams of fresh water; but neither the sea nor the rivers afforded any security. The streets became choked up with dead bodies, which propagated and extended the disease of which they had been the victims.

Estelle and  
Moustier.

In this calamity two *echevins*\* of the city, Estelle and Moustier, displayed a courage, which, seeking no reward either in worldly fame or worldly greatness, ought, if men were rational, to be esteemed far above that of a soldier. They regulated the supply of provisions, and superintended their distribution. Assisted by a Chevalier Rose, who volunteered his services, they cleared the streets and houses of dead bodies, and buried them in deep ditches dug for the purpose. The carts containing the bodies were conducted by criminals condemned to the galleys, who were supplied at the rate of 80 a week for this employment. Not one of the men employed in this service survived: the officer who furnished them had some scruples in sending them; in

\* *Echevins* are officers generally elected by the citizens for a limited time to take care of the police of the town. They likewise have charge of the public buildings.

other circumstances he would have been guilty of 1720.  
murder.

The Bishop of Marseilles, Belzunce, came to add his efforts to those of Rose, Estelle, and Moustier. If his exorcisms were superstitious; his attributing the plague to the anger of Heaven against the Jansenists ridiculous; and the processions through the streets which he himself led barefoot, more likely to increase than diminish the malady; yet his intrepid intercourse with those affected by the contagion at all stages of the disorder, and his constant presence in the hospitals, supported the courage of the citizens, and restrained the profligate carelessness common at such a season. Still more was due to the pious nuns, whose devotion to the service of the sick is the honour of their sex, the glory of the Roman catholic church, and one of the noblest trophies of humanity.

At length Langeron, a naval officer, was sent to command in chief by the Regent. His authority enabled him to clear the port of dead bodies, and to carry into execution more strict regulations for preventing the increase of the contagion.

On the 26th of September a violent north wind swept through the town and country. At first this storm was considered a great misfortune, since it destroyed a new hospital which was building

1720. outside the walls of the town; but it was found that it had likewise cleared the air; and if it did not stop the plague, at least gave a new vigour to the frames of the inhabitants. From this time the contagion abated, although it did not finally cease till June 1721. In the autumn of 1720, two vessels arrived in the port charged with corn for the poor, on the part of the Pope: an act worthy the head of a Christian church.

The Chevalier Rose, who had behaved with so much courage and benevolence, received no reward, and died some time after in indigence. The recompenses of the government were reserved for the women of pleasure of the court, their protectors and protected. \*

Dubois,  
Arch-  
bishop of  
Cambray.  
June, 1720.

The Abbé Dubois finding his influence with the Regent unbounded, now aspired, with the usual ambition of his order, to be a cardinal. In the midst of his intrigues for this purpose, the Cardinal de la Tremouille, Archbishop of Cambray, died at Rome. As Dubois could not yet hope for the hat, he turned his eyes towards the archbishopric; an income of 150,000 livres was a temptation which he could not resist; and neither the recent reputation of Fencelon in that see, nor the general scandal which he knew would accom-

\* During the reign of Napoleon, a column was erected at Marseilles to the memory of the virtuous Bishop.

pany his appointment, deterred him for a moment 1720. from his enterprize. Among the singular means which he employed to effect it, was the intervention of the King of England. By his desire, Des-touches, the well-known comic author, then minister in England, applied to George the First, with whom he was a favourite, for a letter to the Regent, soliciting him to appoint Dubois Archbishop of Cambray. George the First was startled at this request. "How do you imagine," he said, "that a Protestant prince can meddle in the appointment of a French archbishop? The Regent will laugh, and won't do it." "Excuse me, Sir; he will laugh, but he will do it:—in fine, my fortune depends on your Majesty's conduct. If your Majesty does not write this letter, the fault will be imputed to me, and I shall be ruined." At the same time he presented the letter ready written; and the King goodnaturedly said, "Well, if it is any pleasure to you, I will sign it."\*

Thus Dubois, partly by address, and partly by impudence, obtained the archbishopric from the Regent. As he had been hitherto only tonsured, he now was ordained sub-deacon, deacon, and priest, on the same day. The Cardinal de Noailles virtuously refused his sanction to this disgraceful mockery. The Duke of Mazarin said he

\* Duclos. t. ii. p. 80.

1720. believed Dubois had received at the same time his first communion. When he appeared in the council room, after the ceremony, the Prince of Conti made him a satirical compliment on the novelty of the event. Dubois listened, and replied with the utmost gravity, "Your highness shows yourself extremely ill-acquainted with ecclesiastical history, otherwise you would have known that St. Ambrose had done just the same as I." At this extraordinary parallel some turned away to conceal their indignation; others laughed outright; but Dubois tranquilly debated the matter till every one was tired, and then turned to the affairs of the council. The Cardinal Prince of Rohan, Bishop of Strasburg, put himself forward to perform the ceremony of the consecration. One of the assistant bishops was a man of no character; the other was the celebrated and virtuous Massillon. If his conduct on this occasion is not to be justified, and indeed caused bitter repentance to Massillon himself, it is to be said in mitigation, that he was newly appointed to a bishopric; and that by the kindness of the Regent he had been furnished with money to pay the necessary expenses of his first establishment, which he found himself unable to defray.\* Thus it is that he who accepts an obli-

\* Duclos, ii. p. 86.



gation from a bad man, exposes himself to the alternative of ingratitude or immorality; of either disobeying the dictates of his heart, or incurring the reproaches of his conscience. 1720.

The Regent himself was present at the consecration. He had resolved not to go, but was persuaded to do so by his mistress, Madame de Parabère, who told him that if he did not go, Dubois would attribute it to her, and soon ruin her in his good opinion. The story was told the next day by Madame de Parabère herself to another of her lovers, through whom it became known. Of this kind is generally the best, though not the most respectable authority for French history.

About this time Dubois brought forward Breteuil. Breteuil, intendant of Limoges, who is said to have been employed by him to destroy the records of a marriage he had contracted in his youth.\* As a reward for his ingenuity Breteuil was brought to court, and in due time made Secretary of State. The quality most conspicuous about him was his ignorance. He remarked, that nearly all the great pictures of Christ were by a painter of the name

\* Duclos, t. ii. 253. The editor of the *Mémoires Secrets* du C. Dubois, questions the fact of his marriage, but the mere absence of authentic testimony in a case like this, does not seem to me sufficient to overthrow the circumstantial account of St. Simon and Duclos.

1720. of INRI. Some one reproaching him, ventured to say to his face that he did not even know who wrote the Pater (or Lord's Prayer). Breteuil was confounded, till a M. Caumartin whispered in his ear, "Moses." Presently Breteuil renewed the conversation, and said, in a careless way, "To be sure I know who wrote the Pater—it was Moses."

Dubois  
made a  
Cardinal.

Dubois omitted no means, fair or foul, of obtaining the hat of Cardinal. In 1718 the Pretender had endeavoured to tempt him, by one of the few bribes he had left, and offered him his nomination; but Dubois was too much confirmed in the opposite policy to accept the offer. With George the First he had made a merit of this refusal, and had obtained from that Sovereign letters both to the Regent and the Emperor, urgently seconding his wishes.\* The Regent himself wrote to the Pope on the subject in the most pressing manner, although at the same time he said publicly, that if Dubois dared to talk to him of obtaining the hat, he would have him thrown out of window. Such are the miserable shifts of weak minds, equally incapable of refusing to do what they are asked, and of acknowledging actions which public opinion condemns. There is another

\* Duclos. *Mémoires Secrets du C. Dubois.*

remark to be made on this subject. All priests 1720.  
who have obtained high situations under catholic sovereigns have desired to be cardinals, in order to protect themselves from their masters in case of disgrace. For this purpose they usually sacrifice the interest of the state they govern to the wishes of the Pope, a potentate by no means celebrated for granting his favours gratis. And yet, although this conduct is obviously injurious both to the Prince and his people, it has never prevented the monarchs of France and Spain (with the exception of Lewis the Fourteenth), from choosing priests as their ministers.

It would be tiresome to enter into the details of the mutual treacheries of Dubois and the worthless priests who were his agents at Rome; history must blush when she is obliged to record the struggles of men so base, to gratify an unwarrantable ambition. Dubois resolved to spare no means to obtain his favourite object, and considered how he could best please the papal court. It was suggested by the Cardinal de Rohan and the Jesuits, that nothing would be so acceptable at Rome as the reception of the bull *Unigenitus* by the Parliament of Paris. Dubois availed himself of the suggestion: the measure which had appalled Lewis the Fourteenth in the plenitude of his power, and arrested Le Tellier in the full tide of his bigotry,

1720. was now undertaken by the atheistical minister of a dissolute and unbelieving Prince. The facility of the Regent in this affair was surprising: he, who in the beginning of his power had prided himself on holding the scales equal between the different parties, in the end consented to be the tool of the Jesuits, and to sanction acts of the most arbitrary kind, to further the favourite object of their bigotry.

By the contrivance of Dubois a declaration, accepting the bull, was read in the council of Regency, and without taking their opinions, was considered as approved. After this it was read in like manner in the great council, a judicial body, supposed to be less refractory than the Parliament: yet the opposition to the bull was animated and genuine; many of the magistrates spoke with force and effect; one of these, of the name of Perelle, being asked by the Chancellor where he had found such maxims, replied quickly, "In the speeches of the late Chancellor D'Aguesseau."\*

Acceptance  
of the bull  
Unigenitus.  
Dec. 1720.

Some opposition was still made by the Parliament and by the Cardinal de Noailles: D'Aguesseau even offered to resign. It was at this time that the Parliament was banished to Pontoise. Law, full of schemes on every subject, proposed

\* Duclos. t. ii.

that the magistrates should be repaid the sums 1720. they had advanced for their offices, and be replaced by judges dependent on the pleasure of the crown. But milder methods were taken, and a shower of gold overcame all resistance. The Parliament acted as they always have done; deriving their origin from the crown, and not from the people, they avoided a serious rupture, and contenting themselves with a few popular huzzas, made their peace with the court. Such will always be the conduct of any assembly in a monarchy not founded upon popular election. All other opposition soon subsided. The Cardinal de Noailles was growing timid and weary of dispute; the Chancellor had lately regained a very good place, and was loth to leave it.\*

Thus the constitution *Unigenitus*, a theological decision on the abstruse points of grace and free-will, was introduced into France to gratify the malice of the Jesuit Le Tellier, and made the law of the kingdom, to promote the ambition of the profligate priest Dubois. Not only did Dubois establish the authority of the bull, but he restored the formulary, renouncing the five propositions said to be of Jansen, which, since the death of Lewis the Fourteenth, had been much neglected.

\* Duclos. t. ii, 120, 128.

1720. Now, all persons who accepted benefices or offices were obliged to sign it; and the Regent had the subject so much at heart, that he nearly quarrelled with his daughter, the Abbess of Chelles, who refused her signature.\*

Tencin. With this bribe in his hand, Dubois pushed his favourite point at Rome. The Abbé Tencin was despatched to add fresh activity to the negotiations. Tencin was a man of the most worthless character. For his success in the world he was chiefly indebted to his sister, who, after having been a nun in a convent near Grenoble, had renounced her vows, and under the title of canoness, sought in Paris gallantry and amusement. In 1717 she gave birth to a child, who became celebrated in the world by the name of D'Alembert; not long afterwards she succeeded in acquiring, as mistress of Dubois, a considerable influence in the disposal of public patronage. Her house was the resort of all the men of wit and letters in Paris; she herself was remarkable for the grace and dexterity of her conversation. In this situation she employed all her influence to promote the fortunes of her brother: the Abbé Tencin was appointed to operate the mock conversion of Law, and having acquired a large sum by means of that adven-

\* Vie de P. D'Orleans, ii. 289.

turer, was now chosen for the mission to Rome. 1721.

A little before his departure an unpleasant accident occurred. He was accused before the Parliament of simony. Finding that the advocate employed by his adversary did not press the cause, Tencin himself addressed his judges, and seizing what he thought a favourable moment, offered to clear himself from the charge by a solemn oath. The lawyer opposed to him, who had been waiting for this opportunity, said quietly that this was not necessary, as he had in his hands the original contract, signed by Tencin, which he immediately produced. The judges were transported with indignation, and passed a decree consigning the accused to infamy; the audience were struck with the sight of so much profligacy, and raised a shout of abhorrence; the Abbé Tencin himself slunk away in confusion; but he went nevertheless to Rome, as the fit representative of the government of France.

A much greater man than the Abbé Tencin was prevailed upon to undertake the journey to Rome. Dubois insinuated to the Cardinal de Rohan, that if he would obtain the wished-for hat, his own influence with the Regent should be exerted to make the Cardinal prime minister. The Cardinal de Rohan was about to set off on his mission with this delusive hope, when intelligence

Death of  
the Pope.



1721. arrived of the death of the Pope, which of course quickened his journey.

The Cardinal de Rohan took Tencin for his conclavist, and left Laffiteau in the city to transmit the letters of Dubois. In spite of the pretended seclusion of the conclave, Laffiteau found means to enter it every day ; and bribes to a large amount were offered to the holy Cardinals. Tencin however concluded the whole by a master-stroke. He promised all the influence of the French party and French money to Cardinal Conti, on condition that he would sign a written promise to make Dubois a cardinal, if elected. Conti signed the promise, and became Pope, with the name of Innocent the Thirteenth.\*

When elected, however, the new Pope either felt, or feigned scruples at giving the first dignity of the church to a man of notorious bad life and unbelief. After a long and fruitless negotiation, Tencin threatened to publish his promise if he did not speedily accomplish it. The Pope alarmed at this threat thought it better to compound ; and all his scruples were finally overcome by a gift of 12,000 crowns, to buy a library. Dubois was chosen a member of the Sacred College.

Tencin however was not satisfied : he still retained the promise ; and again threatened to pub-

Nomina-  
tion of Du-  
bois. July  
6, 1721.

\* Mémoires Secrets du C. Dubois.

lish it unless he himself was likewise made a Cardinal. Innocent saw himself entangled in such a labyrinth of vice and scandal, that he fell ill and died. 1721.

Dubois received his accession of dignity with great apparent modesty, and even disarmed some of his most decided enemies by the propriety of his behaviour. He looked however to the enjoyment of his new honours: as a first step, the Cardinal de Rohan was admitted to the council of Regency, and made all the nobility indignant by taking his place immediately after the Princes of the blood. The fury of the nobles was much increased when, at their next meeting, they saw Dubois assume the same pre-eminence, and all by one accord left the room. The Duke of Noailles, for once compelled by anger to speak sincerely, said to Dubois as he went out, "This day will be memorable in history; it will be recorded that your entrance into the council caused it to be deserted by all the nobility of the kingdom."\* What is more singular is, that D'Aguesseau was likewise so much offended at the precedence claimed by the new Cardinal, that he resigned his office, which was given to M. D'Armenonville, a man of slender capacity. The violent indignation displayed on this point of etiquette is the more surprising, as no

\* Vie de P. D'Orleans. ii. 249.

1721. one doubted of the King's power, when of age, to give precedence to cardinals in the council; Richelieu and Mazarin had enjoyed it before, and Fleury obtained it afterwards without resistance; the cavil now raised, was founded solely on the minority of the King.\* What an insight does this squabble give into the character of the great men of the time! They submitted quietly to the predominant influence of Dubois over all the public affairs; they made no objection to the admittance into the council of a man without truth or honesty, but they could not bear that he should sit in a chair which betokened a rank higher than their own!

From this censure we may perhaps exempt D'Aguesseau: it is possible he may have used the precedence as a pretext, and that his real motive was disgust at the character of Dubois; but if so, he would have done better to have left no doubt of his sentiments.

The King's  
Illness.  
July 31st.

On the 31st of July the King was seized with a violent fever, accompanied with delirium, and some alarming symptoms. The medical attendants were divided in opinion. Helvetius, father of the celebrated author, said that bleeding was necessary, and unless it was resorted to he would not answer for the King's life. The rest were all violently against him; but supported by some other phy-

\* Vie de P. D'Orleans, ii. p. 251.

sicians who were called in, Helvetius was allowed 1721.  
to bleed the King. As soon as the operation was performed, the patient was visibly relieved, the fever abated, and five days afterwards he was able to rise and receive the compliments of the foreign ministers and public bodies.\*

Marshal Villeroy gave a new proof, on this occasion, that pride and meanness are very compatible. On the 25th of August, celebrated as the King's birthday, an immense crowd was assembled in the garden of the Tuileries. Villeroy took the King out on the balcony, and said to him repeatedly, "Look at this concourse of people, my master; it all belongs to you; it is all yours," with many other phrases of the same kind.†

The Regent was anxious to renew the intimate relations of the two branches of the House of Bourbon. For this purpose Dubois, by his direction, concluded a treaty of alliance with Philip the Fifth, according to which Lewis the Fifteenth was to marry the Infanta of Spain, and the Prince of Asturias was to espouse Mdle. de Montpensier, daughter of the Regent. Philip was overjoyed at the prospect of renewing the family ties, and giving a Queen to France; while the Regent was no less pleased at the prospect of conciliating the only enemy who had ever been formidable to him, and

Treaty of  
Marriage  
with Spain.  
1721.

\* Duclos, t. ii. 155.

† Duclos, ii. 160.

1721. raising his daughter to the throne of Spain. Lewis the Fifteenth alone showed some boyish anger at being married at twelve years old to a child of three, but Villeroy and Fleury took the part of the Regent, and the marriage was approved in council. Fleury at this time refused the archbishoprick of Rheims,\* the first ecclesiastical dignity in the kingdom. It has naturally been inferred that he already aspired to greater things; yet it was a bold calculation which took for its basis, that he should either displace or survive the Duke of Orleans.

Dubois  
Prime  
Minister.  
1722.

One object of ambition still remained for Dubois, namely, the place and title of prime minister. His dignity of Cardinal enabled him to aspire to this honour, for which his birth would otherwise have disqualified him.

The manner in which he accomplished his object is the highest proof of his art. He had at first obtained the management of public affairs by encouraging the debauchery of the Regent, and by relieving him from the weight of business at the hours devoted to his minions and mistresses. He now attained the supreme and entire direction of the royal power, by a totally opposite course of conduct. By his intrigues he banished from court the Duke of Noailles, Canillac, Nocé, and Broglie,

\* Duclos, t. ii. p. 161.

the most agreeable men of the society of the Regent. An accident enabled him to remove the court to Versailles. A dispute arose respecting the appointment of a confessor to the King : by the protection of Dubois, Father Linieres, a Jesuit, was named to this important post. The Cardinal de Noailles refused to allow the Jesuit to confess the King, and the court was removed to Versailles that the confession might be made at St. Cyr, in the diocese of Chartres.\* 1722.

This circumstance tended greatly to augment the influence of Dubois. At Versailles the Regent, unable to know the opinion of the people, or to see any but the flatterers of his minister, became a mere tool in his hands. Every man addressed himself to the Cardinal, in preference to the Regent. At the same time Dubois took care to load his master with business, which he knew he had no longer vigour to despatch.

The only two men who were obstacles in the way of Dubois, were Villeroy and St. Simon. The cardinal endeavoured to gain both. Villeroy was an old favourite of Lewis the Fourteenth : proud of his former honours and his present dignity ; and supplying by the manners and experience of an old courtier, the real emptiness and vanity of his character. Dubois attempted a reconciliation

\* Duclos, ii. 130, 134.

1722. with him, which at first promised to succeed ; but in the midst of his first visit, Villeroy losing his temper, began to pour forth a torrent of invective against the character of his host. At length he concluded by saying, “ I have but one piece of advice to give you ; have me arrested ; yes, have me arrested ; for if you do not, I will not stop till I have overthrown you.” Dubois took his advice ; and the arrest was accomplished without any difficulty. Villeroy raged in vain against the court and the people for not taking up his cause, and the Duke of Charost quietly took possession of his place. \*

Villeroy being thus removed, the next person to gain was the Duke of St. Simon. St. Simon, who has been often mentioned, was an honest and an able man, but his integrity and his talents were alike neutralized by a ridiculous estimate of his rank, a prodigious notion of the importance of etiquette, and a number of narrow prejudices with respect both to persons and affairs. His contempt for the meanness he saw around him, and his hatred of the Jesuits, often led him to an exaggerated notion of the vices, the schemes, and the objects of his contemporaries. He was strongly attached to the Regent, and yet it is remarkable, that he seems to have had little influence upon his

\* St. Simon. Duclos, ii. 220, et seq.



actions; while the Regent, by knowing his weaknesses, often swayed the mind of St. Simon. 1722.

In order to acquire the support of St. Simon, Dubois sent him a message by Bellisle, who afterwards played a distinguished part in public affairs. St. Simon returned a discouraging answer, but not an absolute refusal.

Every thing being now prepared, St. Simon going one evening to the Regent, found Bellisle at the door, who entreated him to use all his efforts to make Dubois prime minister. St. Simon did not give any answer, but proceeded to his business with the Regent, who, contrary to his usual gay and familiar manner, appeared grave, absent and uneasy. At length St. Simon asking him what was the reason of his absence, he hesitated, and was confused. St. Simon then asked him if there was any truth in what was reported, that Dubois was to be made prime minister. The Regent appeared relieved by this question, and answered with apparent frankness, "that it was true, Dubois was dying to obtain this post; that for his own part he was tired of business, and of the constraint of Versailles; that at Paris he could at least retire at supper, with a society which was always ready at hand; but, that to pass the whole day occupied with business only to be wearied all

Interview  
of the Re-  
gent and  
the Duke  
of St.  
Simon.

1722. the evening, was a thing which surpassed his strength."

St. Simon replied ironically, that this reasoning was so solid it could not be answered. The Regent then said with more emphasis, that no one could imagine the fatigue of the days he passed, nor the tiresomeness of the evenings spent with the Duchess of Orleans; and that he did not know where to go to amuse himself. To this St. Simon replied by quoting the example of the Prince of Conti, who, although out of favour with Lewis the Fourteenth, had always collected around him the best and most agreeable company of the court. He asked, what hindered the Duke of Orleans, Regent of the kingdom, with all the agreeable qualities of the Prince of Conti, from having suppers at Versailles, composed of the most distinguished and most remarkable persons in the kingdom? That to do this, it was only necessary to prefer good company to bad; to leave off that language of debauch and obscenity which had hitherto made it an honour to avoid his society; and to give up those disgraceful associates, whose drunkenness and indecency were unpardonable after the age of twenty; that he could not disguise the indignation and contempt with which the obscure companions of his scandalous evenings were regarded, and that at a time when the King's

majority was approaching, it was more peculiarly <sup>1722.</sup> necessary not to give any hold to his enemies, by which they might remove him from power. He concluded by saying, that this was the first time he had opened his lips on this subject, but that he had been forced to break silence, by the prospect of the abyss into which the Regent was about to fall.

The Duke of Orleans leaning with his elbows on his bureau, heard this discourse in silence. When it was over, he said it was all very true; that, moreover, he had no longer any passion for women; and that wine, far from being agreeable, had become disgusting to him. On hearing this confession, St. Simon exclaimed; “Then you must be possessed by the devil, to ruin yourself in this world and in the next, for an attraction which no longer gives you any pleasure. What is the use of so much talent and so much experience; nay, what is the use of your very senses, which in spite of yourself advise you on the side of reason? With this apathy and disgust, what pleasure can you have in your suppers followed by a riot, that would make any one but yourself stop his ears with horror? The pleasure of illusion is a pleasure that soon passes; it is the deplorable resource of an old debauchee, who consoles his dotage with the vile recollections excited by the filth to which

1722. he listens." After this, St. Simon besought the Regent to give the nation the satisfaction of seeing their ruler lead a rational life, worthy the master of the kingdom, and to deliver them from the fear of seeing the King fall into the same excesses: more pardonable it was true at his age and with such an example, but yet so intolerable upon the throne, which is fenced round with a more strict observance of decency than the dwelling of the meanest subject. He concluded, by exhorting the Prince to avoid the fate of Gaston, Duke of Orleans, who died at Blois, abandoned and despised.

After a short silence the Regent raised himself in his chair, and said, " Well, then, I will go and plant cabbages at Villers-Cotterets !" Villers-Cotterets was the country house of the Duke of Orleans. But St. Simon combated the plan of retirement as much as he had done the former project, and (needlessly perhaps) represented to his master, that with his abilities and connexions, he would never be left to the quiet enjoyment of repose. The Regent walked up and down the room for some time without speaking; at last turning suddenly to St. Simon, and taking him by the arm, he asked him if he did not recollect Dubois the servant of St. Laurent, and thinking himself lucky in being so: then passing in review the whole life

of Dubois, he said, "Well! with all this he is not <sup>1722.</sup> satisfied, and he persecutes me to be declared prime minister, and when he is that, he still will not be satisfied: what would he have more? . . . make himself God Almighty if he could." "It is for you, Sir, who know him so well, to take care not to make him the stepping ladder, by which he will mount over your head." "Oh! I will prevent that—I will prevent that!"

After walking about some time longer the Regent sate down, and keeping his head between his hands and his elbows on the bureau for near ten minutes, at length said in a feeble voice, and with a look of shame, "But why wait and not declare it?" Such was the result of this long conversation; and the utmost St. Simon could obtain was, that the decision should be put off to the next day.

The next day St. Simon found the Regent alone in his room, walking up and down. "Well!" he cried, "what more have we to say on this business? It seems to me that every thing is said, and that nothing remains but to declare it." St. Simon answered, "that for a thing of this importance, it was a decision soon made." The Regent replied, "that he had thought much of it, but that in truth he was burthened with business all day, weariness all the evening, and the persecutions of Dubois every instant."

1722. St. Simon endeavoured to rally, and made a long recapitulation of his former reasoning. When he had done, the Regent said in a tone of affliction, "There must be an end of this; there only remains to declare it immediately." St. Simon immediately took leave and left the room. In the anti-chamber he found Bellisle, who asked with impatience how he got on: "Admirably," said St. Simon; "I have concluded the business." A needless piece of dissimulation.

I have given this long dialogue, because nothing can paint so well the infirmity of mind, produced by the mingled influence of power and vice. What would appear more desirable, than the supreme government of such a kingdom as France, full of valour, arts, ingenuity, and talent? What more sordid, than low debauchery in bad company to a man satiated with the indulgence of his senses? Yet this able prince surrendered the one for the miserable relics of the other.

It is worth while to mention, that another account is given of the reasons which determined the Regent to gratify the wishes of Dubois. It is said that Laffiteau, Bishop of Sisteron, a prelate who had ruined his constitution and character by his licentious life, pleaded the cause of the Cardinal with his master. "It is folly in him to wish it," said the Regent; "he cannot live six months."

“Is that certain?”—“Quite: I will send the 1723. surgeon to you, who will confirm it.” “Then I advise your Royal Highness to grant his request, and the sooner the better.” “Why so?”—“Because the King will soon be of age, and then you can only retain your authority by becoming prime minister. But to assume this title at once, would be unexampled, and excite objections; give it, therefore, to Dubois, and after his death it will seem easy and natural to inherit his place, which you will have the appearance of taking from attachment to the King.”\* The account given by St. Simon seems to me, however, the more probable.

The time now arrived for the King's coronation; it was performed with the accustomed solemnity at Rheims. In the beginning of the year 1723 died Madame, mother of the Regent; a princess, whose character has been amply pourtrayed by her contemporaries, and in her own letters. She was very ugly and very good-humoured, had much German pride, but likewise much German honesty; and if her strong aversions were sometimes caused by prejudice, they were often justly inspired by the vices of the court at which she lived. An epitaph was devised for her,—“Here

Death of  
Madame.  
1723.

\* Duclos, t. ii. 216, 219.



1723. lies Idleness,"—meaning that she was the mother of all vice.

Feb. 1723. On the 16th of February, the King having entered his fourteenth year, received the compliments of the court upon his coming of age.

Few events of any kind illustrate or disgrace the life of Dubois after his attaining the honour of prime minister. He took his seat in the French Academy, and Fontenelle addressed him in a speech loaded with encomiastic epithets.\* The clergy, which had not assembled since the year

May. 1715, being called together this year, unanimously elected Dubois their president. Vile and precipitate adulation !

Death of  
Cardinal  
Dubois.

It was the custom in France for the troops at a review to pay to a prime minister nearly the same honours which were paid to the King ; a custom probably introduced by the martial temper of Richlieu. Dubois was ambitious of this distinction, and at the risk of his life got on horseback at a review which took place at Meudon.† This imprudence hastened the progress of his disease ; an abscess burst ; and the surgeons declared that unless he underwent an operation, he had not four days to live. Dubois swore at the surgeons, and refused ; nor was it till the Duke of Orleans

\* Vie de P. d'Orleans, ii. 353.

† Duclos, ii. 255. St. Simon.

arrived and prayed him to submit, that he con- 1723.  
sented to undergo the operation. It was previously proposed to him to receive the communion: "That is soon said," he replied, "but there is a ceremony for Cardinals different from that of other people, and as I do not know it, you must go and ask the Cardinal Bissey, at Paris." Thus he gained time, and avoided the communion: he was shut up with a friar, however, for seven or eight minutes to make his confession. When the surgeons performed the operation, they declared, from the nature of the wound, that he could not live many hours. Twenty-four hours afterwards he died, grinding his teeth, and swearing at the surgeons to his last moments.\*

Dubois died immensely rich. His political and ecclesiastical preferments amounted to about 574,000 livres a year. Added to this, he is said to have received a pension of 40,000*l.* a year from England, which, if true, would make his whole income amount to nearly 64,000*l.* a year. But it is probable that the amount of his pension is exaggerated; and very possible that it never existed. He had accumulated a great sum in personals, which fell first to his brother, and afterwards to his nephew, a simple and virtuous canon in the church, who was ashamed of the reputation of his uncle. The

\* St. Simon. Duclos. ii. 267.

1723. greater part of the succession he gave to the poor ; the rest he employed in building a handsome monument, with an inscription which, after enumerating all the titles of the Cardinal, ends with these words :—

*Solidiora et stabiliora bona mortuo precare.*

Anecdotes  
of Dubois.

I have not much to add to what I have before said of the character of Dubois. His chief talent lay in intrigue, and in governing the Duke of Orleans. He is said to have employed so much of his time in this last occupation, that he had no leisure left for public affairs ; and a story is current of his taking up a large parcel of unsealed letters and throwing them into the fire, saying, “ Now I have brought up all my arrears.” Other accounts represent him as very industrious ; rising at five every morning to go through the public business. But this account seems to rest on a plan never executed, given him by his chief clerk ; he was quick in doing business, but could hardly have been regular.

Dubois was sober and temperate in his habits, though he kept a magnificent table, and spared no expense becoming his rank and station. Many anecdotes are related of his ungovernable temper. He would often get up and run round the room upon the tables and chairs, even in the presence of the Regent. Those who attended his audience,

of whatever rank they might be, were often dismissed with rudeness, if not with oaths. One day a lady of the court went to wait upon him to thank him for a favour conferred upon her. She had no sooner begun "Monseigneur," than Dubois interrupted her; "Oh! Monseigneur, Monseigneur, it can't be done"—"But Monseigneur"—"By all the devils, when I tell you it cannot be."—"Monseigneur,"—began again the poor lady, when Dubois seized her by the shoulders, turned her round, and pushed her out of the room.\*

With a violent temper, Dubois was not ill-natured. An officer who had long attended his levee to make an application, burst out a laughing at seeing him swear violently: Dubois came up to him, and said, "I see you are no fool; you shall have what you ask for." Another time he was swearing at his clerks, saying, that with thirty clerks he could not get his business done: Venier, his secretary, after looking at him a long time in silence, answered, "Monseigneur, take one clerk more to swear and scold for you; half your time will be saved, and your business will be done." Dubois laughed, and was appeased. It must be said to his praise, that he seems to have been quite exempt from cruelty.

The hold which Dubois maintained over the

\* St. Simon.

1723. Regent was in great part owing to the badness of his character. The Duke of Orleans was a general disbeliever in human probity; he thought every man profoundly selfish; and therefore while he distrusted men of virtue, he concluded that Dubois, whom every one else despised or hated, would naturally cling to his service as the only means of advancement. Dubois raised himself by this ladder. One day the Regent asked him the contents of a paper he had given him to sign; "Sign, Monseigneur," he replied, "You know I have a natural instinct for all that concerns your interest." Thus it frequently happens that he who prides himself on his knowledge of human nature, and penetration into character, becomes the slave of some vile being who attacks a weak point, and persuades the credulity of self-love. The misanthropic observer is the more exposed to this danger, as in his eyes the well-known profligacy of a notorious villain is not worse than the continual hypocrisy of a man of principle.

Conduct of  
Dubois as a  
Minister.

The conduct of Dubois, as a minister of state, must be viewed in two different aspects. As Secretary for Foreign Affairs, he has been accused of selling the interests of his country to the English, and sacrificing the true policy of France to the private advantage of the Regent. Probably, if his ambition or cupidity would have been grati-

fied by thus betraying the interests of the country 1723. he was called to govern, Dubois would not have hesitated to have done so; but I much doubt whether the effect of his conduct in this respect was so pernicious as it has been supposed. If he had given a helping hand to the Pretender, and assisted the ambitious views of the Queen of Spain in Italy, it is possible he might have dethroned the house of Hanover, and obtained a better sovereignty for the second son of Philip the Fifth; but on the other hand, he would have incurred the risk of provoking George the First to the same animosity which inspired William the Third, and thus involving France in another long war against the whole of Europe. It is easy to perceive how dangerous such a contest would have been to a kingdom which Lewis the Fourteenth had left exhausted of men, embarrassed in finances, and weary of danger. The utmost possible gain would not have been nearly equal to the utmost probable loss.

The worst part of the government of Dubois, is undoubtedly his disregard of all decency and propriety in the internal administration. The abuses of the reign of Lewis the Fourteenth were carried off with such an air of dignity and confidence, that men doubted whether they were evils, and while the people were cheated by appearances,

1723. the governors themselves seemed to share the delusion. But Dubois scarcely concealed his contempt for the institutions by which he profited: placed at the head of the church and state, he avowed that he thought religion an imposture, and political integrity a fable. The open profligacy of his life was apparent even to the vulgar;\* and his theoretical disbelief in the obligations of moral duty was scarcely less notorious than his practical violation of them. If religion and government were subsequently overthrown in France, Dubois was the first sapper of their foundations; he took advantage of the established authority to promote his own views, careless of what might follow; and the writers of the age seemed almost justified in hating princes and priests, when the Regent and Dubois had given so striking an example of the worthlessness of the court and the clergy. The Regent's own vices indeed might have been set down to the violence of passion overcoming the force of precept; but the cold systematic wickedness of his minister was neither veiled by refinement, nor interrupted by any gleams of returning

\* A footman of the Archbishop of Rheims said one day to a footman of the Cardinal Dubois, "*Mon maitre est plus grand seigneur que le tien, car il sacre les rois:*" to which the other replied, "*Quoi! mon maitre sacre tous les jours le bon Dieu; c'est bien plus que les Rois.*"—*Mémoires de Madame*, p. 252.



virtue. The Regent overstepped the boundaries of right and wrong; Dubois threw them to the ground. 1723.

The Duke of Orleans was not sorry for the death of his favourite: a thunderstorm coming on during his last moments, the Duke exclaimed, "I think this tempest will carry off my buffoon." As soon as Dubois was dead, he took the place of prime minister, and his first act was to recall the friends and companions whom the jealousy of his minister had exiled. To Nocé he wrote, "Come back, my dear Nocé, nothing shall separate us in future: *morta la bestia morto il veneno*." When Noailles returned, the Regent embraced him cordially, protested that his disgrace was wholly owing to Dubois, and added with a sort of confusion, "Well! what shall we say of him?" The Duke of Noailles replied with equal taste and quickness: "Pax vivis, requies defunctis." The Regent by these speeches only added another very common weakness to that which he had before shown; the weakness of appearing to despise the man whom he was unable to resist.

Every one was rejoiced at the death of Dubois, but no one more so than the young king. With that extreme susceptibility of impression which belongs to all children, he had taken a strong dislike to the Cardinal, whose coarse familiarity and

Behaviour  
of the Duke  
of Orleans.

Joy of  
Lewis XV.

1723. decided tone of superiority had betrayed an intention of governing him, to which he was by no means willing to submit. The Regent, on the contrary, approached the royal child with the same respect as he would have shown to Lewis the Fourteenth ; conversed with him in a gentle tone ; amused him with topics suited to his age ; affected always to lay before him the appointments he proposed to make, and ended every proposal with the reserve, " But you are the master ; I am only here to execute your commands." If the King showed a wish to promote any individual (which happened but seldom), he skilfully caught his meaning and acceded to his desire. The little monarch was delighted with this appearance of governing the kingdom himself, and in spite of the lessons of Villeroy, acquired an affection for the Regent, which always lived in his memory.

Upon resuming the reins of government, the Duke of Orleans endeavoured to return to habits of business, to which he had been for some time a stranger. He recurred at this time to his favourite idea of paper money, and longed in his heart to try again the system of Law, avoiding the errors into which he had been formerly led. But his projects and his attention to business soon vanished together ; he abandoned the government to the secretaries of state, and sunk altogether into his

old habits of debauch. His mornings were clouded with stupor, and his altered looks gave an intimation of apoplexy: his surgeons and his friends remonstrated on the danger to which he exposed himself. He answered with indifference, that vain apprehensions should not deprive him of his pleasures, and that he preferred a sudden death. The symptoms at length became so urgent, that Chirac, his surgeon, pressed him urgently to allow himself to be bled. He replied, that he had too much business on his hands at that time, but that on the Monday following he would give himself up entirely to his physicians, and in the mean time live abstemiously. On that same day however he dined plentifully, contrary to his usual custom. After dinner he was sitting by the fire-side with the Duchess of Phalaris, one of his mistresses, when he suddenly fell lifeless in her arms. She instantly ran out for assistance, but as it was near the hour of the Duke's doing business with the King, none of the attendants were at hand. It was half an hour before a surgeon could be found, and the prince was then quite dead.

La Vrillière, secretary of state, went immediately to announce the death of the Duke of Orleans to the Duke of Bourbon, whom he advised to ask for the place of prime minister; and to the Bishop of Frejus, to whom he told what he had

1723.

Thursday,  
Dec. 2,  
1723.

Death of  
the Duke of  
Orleans.

Duke of  
Bourbon  
Prime Mi-  
nister.

1723. done. He then caused a patent of prime minister, and the form of oath to be drawn out by his clerks. With these documents the three went to the King, who cried bitterly when he was told of the death of the Duke of Orleans. Being asked by Fleury if he would have the Duke of Bourbon for his prime minister, he assented by nodding his head. The Duke then stepped forward, thanked the King, and took the oaths. Thus the place of the Duke of Orleans was filled an hour after his decease.

Review of  
the Re-  
gency.

The period known in France by the name of the Regency, may be considered as the immediate source of those disorders of the government which ended in its horrible dissolution. Yet the Duke of Orleans was naturally endowed with the divine virtues of mercy, goodness, humanity, and we may add, a love of freedom and toleration, which were never quite extinguished. But on the other hand, he threw off as needless and impertinent, the solemn obligations of faith, the tacit engagements of constancy to friends, and justice to all; the reverence due to an Almighty God; in short, every duty which the natural reason of mankind has added to our moral feelings, and which Christians have respected as the precept of revealed religion. It is worth the while then of those who have done likewise, to observe what benefit he

obtained by his emancipation. The example is 1723. the more valuable, because persons who have adopted the opinions, even with the talents and good qualities of the Duke of Orleans, have seldom had so favourable a situation for professing them. Being opposed to the general sense of society, they have complained that they were pursued by calumnies, and persecuted by hypocrites; they have appealed from the judgment of that world whose laws they had derided, and whose animosity they had provoked. But the Regent of France was in a condition to dictate manners, as well as rule the state: he led, instead of following society, and met with no serious resistance to his will. The tiresome hypocrisy of the court that had preceded him, was a bounty upon some latitude of morals, and made his course easy. He came into possession of an unlimited power when he was about forty years of age, after having spent his early life as a subject, neither too poor nor too great, endowed with sagacity to penetrate the characters of men, and rich in an experience which gave him a wide knowledge of the world. His mind was singularly happy, collecting with little reading, and retaining with little trouble, information of all kinds; in sciences, in arts, in history, in genealogy. He was, like Charles the Second of England, fond of experiments in chemistry,

1723. and had moreover a taste for painting, in which he was both a collector and an artist.\* According to the testimony of Maréchal, there were five or six different professions in which, if obliged to work for his bread, he might have made a fortune. He was gifted with a natural eloquence, which never forsook him, enabling him to treat with clearness the most intricate question of finance, and with grace the highest subjects of human speculation. He united, says St. Simon, what few persons do—great quickness, with such solidity of judgment, that he would never have been deceived in any thing if he had followed the first decision of his mind.

Possessed of these splendid advantages, the Regent manifestly failed in making the nation or himself happy. Instead of endeavouring by wise and detailed regulations to improve the practice, and enlarge the spirit of the administration, he fixed his attention on a showy but delusive scheme. He intoxicated the people with false hopes, and produced a spirit of gambling in the nation, which enriched the unscrupulous jobber, and ruined the simple and unwary. He destroyed at the

\* Some tapestry made from his designs represented the story of Daphnis and Chloe: the pictures he collected were sold in England at the beginning of the Revolution, and now adorn the houses of the Marquis of Stafford and the Earl of Carlisle.

same time the energies of his own mind ; his taste 1723.  
became depraved, and he found every thing insipid but playing at hazard with the property of a nation. He threw the whole business of the kingdom into the hands of a base and profligate flatterer, whom he himself despised, and yet was mean enough to dread. In his private life, having no occupation that interested his heart, finding nothing in mankind or in literature that touched a chord in his bosom, he was perpetually suffering the pains and penalties of idleness.\* He was weary from the very want of restraint. He found it difficult, if not impossible to discover, even in his hours of debauch, a means of making pleasure agreeable. He endeavoured to give a zest to his excesses by carrying them to the greatest pitch on Good Friday and other sacred days ; † thus taking away all dignity from his infidelity, and showing his weakness at the moment he meant to display his strength. Yet even the liberty of a private rake was at length denied him ; his chosen companions were banished for speaking ill of his vile favourite ; and his mistress could only hope to remain with him by making him the slave of Dubois.

\* On n'a vu jamais personne aussi desœuvré ni aussi livré au néant et à l'ennui que le Duc d'Orleans. St. Simon.

† Ib.



1723. Although to all appearance a man the most indifferent to fame, the Regent was not altogether insensible to reproach. He bore some charges indeed, even of the gravest kind, with astonishing calmness. A person of the name of Lagrange Chancel wrote a satire upon him called the *Philippics*. The Regent prevailed upon the Duke of St. Simon to procure it, and read it to him. He heard the strongest and bitterest accusations, even that of incest, with composure, saying only, from time to time, "What good poetry!" But when he found himself represented as lying in wait to poison the young King, he cried out that it was too horrible, his eyes filled with tears, and he appeared to sink beneath the weight of so cruel a calumny.\* The imputation indeed was wholly unmerited. But in justice we must confess, that he who tries to gain a reputation for wickedness, an ambition that is but too common, has no right to complain if the world give him credit for more crimes than he is capable of committing. No one has a privilege to proclaim his utter disregard of half the duties of morality, and then offer his character as a security for the performance of the remainder.

He died prematurely, in the 50th year of his age, only eight years after his uncle, a victim to

\* St. Simon.

his own intemperance, and left a name disgraced 1723.  
to after-times in the whole world, but deserving  
above all the reprobation of his country, and the  
curses of his family and his race. His adminis-  
tration may be considered as an experiment, how  
far vice in a ruler is fitted to answer the ends  
of government: happily, the result was calamitous  
both to the Prince who governed, and the people  
who obeyed.

The death of the Duke of Orleans excited the  
hopes of the great, and exposed the misery of the  
multitude. The clergy, whether Jesuit or Jan-  
senist, had held him in abhorrence, knowing that  
he would not yield entirely to the views of either.  
The Jansenists were enraged at the progress that  
had been made in favour of the bull *Unigenitus*;  
the Jesuits were angry that they had obtained no  
more. The Parliament was mortified at the blows  
it had received, and began again to prepare for  
combat. The army was indignant at the profu-  
sion of orders which had been sold by secretaries  
and by women to all who would buy, and at the  
economy of the treasury, which left them with a  
pay insufficient to enable them to struggle through  
the distress of the times. "The mass of Paris  
and of the provinces," says St. Simon, "reduced  
to despair by the cruel operations of the finances,  
by the incessant schemes of the government to

Reflec-  
tions.

1723. draw the money of the kingdom to themselves, which made all property uncertain; and by the excessive dearness of all things, as well those of luxury as of necessity, had long sighed for that relief and deliverance, which the excess of misery and desire made appear as certain, as in fact it was imaginary. Indeed, there was no person of solid property who was not vexed and alarmed at the tricks of state, or who was not in despair at seeing his patrimony melt away in his hands, notwithstanding any prudence he might use, and himself deprived of the means of sustaining his family, without any remedy in the laws, or any protection for his just claim.” \*

On reading this picture of the state of the country at the death of the Regent, drawn by the hand of a man who is known to have been attached to him, we are tempted to ask how it happened, that a brave and spirited nation did not take advantage of this period, to demand a more honest stewardship of their affairs. It seems extraordinary that after the death of the Duke of Orleans, the people should have permitted absolute power to pass so quietly into the hands of the Duke of Bourbon. So many vices, and so much negligence in their rulers, would have taught a people that were wise, to ask for a better form of govern-

\* St. Simon.

ment. Indeed, I own my wonder is not that resistance came at length, but that it was so long delayed. Every circumstance which occurred at the period of which we are treating, shows the strength of that prevalent passion in all monarchies—admiration for a Prince, and unbounded confidence in his wisdom and integrity. Thus, when in the latter years of Lewis the Fourteenth, the people were reluctantly compelled to renounce their blind zeal for a monarch who no longer made them glorious abroad, or happy at home, they fixed their hopes on the Duke of Burgundy. When that Prince was buried, an immense crowd of the poor assembled to accompany the hearse, mixing tears with rage, and calling out against the Duke of Orleans as the poisoner of his relations. Not long afterwards the Duke of Orleans himself was popular, and his name was celebrated in the songs of the people as Philippe le Debonnaire. But the popularity of Lewis the Fifteenth, whilst yet an infant, exceeded all bounds. Upon his recovery from a dangerous illness in 1723, the people assembled day after day at the Tuileries to testify their joy, and for two months banquets were made by private families in the streets to show their delight at the recovery of the King. The same anxiety and the same joy prevailed a very few years afterwards when he was again

1723 dangerously ill ; and the sympathy shown by the people obtained for Lewis the surname of the Beloved. By such ardent demonstrations did the nation testify their hopes in the Princes of the House of Bourbon. Was it wonderful that, after a century of patience, they were at length roused to indignation at finding all their hopes had been disappointed, and all their confidence misplaced ?

The dissoluteness which prevailed during the Regency among the higher ranks, was perhaps never exceeded. It somewhat resembled certainly, although it far surpassed, the licentiousness of the age of Charles the Second in England. Both followed immediately a period of great religious severity, and both found some excuse in condemning the hypocrisy by which that severity had been accompanied ; but there is this essential difference between the two—the courtiers of Charles the Second replaced the saintly followers of Cromwell—the debauched nobility of the Regency were the same persons with the pious attendants on the devotions of Lewis the Fourteenth.

Miscellaneous Occurrences.

During the Regency games of hazard were forbidden by royal authority. The Duke of Tremes pretended to the privilege of having them in his house, as governor of Paris. The lieutenant of police, Machault, said that if this was allowed,

he would tolerate every gaming-house in Paris: 1723. the Regent, with his usual facility, gave the Duke of Tresmes 2000 livres of pension to desist from his pretension. Some time afterwards the Princess of Carignan, who affected devotion, obtained permission to have a gaming-table in her house. The Duke of Tresmes, without resigning his pension, immediately resumed his privilege. But it being found that these places were the fruitful causes of ruin, suicide, and assassination, Cardinal Fleury ordered them to be shut up.\* It is the disgraceful practice of the government of France of the present day to derive a revenue from a vice which it tolerates, and therefore promotes: the folly of such conduct is no less than its wickedness; for the unsuccessful gambler might often be a prosperous and useful citizen, did not this accursed vice lead him from his path; while on the other hand, the man who gains his fortune at the gaming-table, is almost always a stranger to honest industry and productive occupation.

During the Regency first began the flood of books of all kinds, attacking, some with argument and some with ridicule, the established religion, government, and morals. To remedy this abuse, the Regent renewed an ancient order, forbidding

Licence of  
the Press.

\* Duclos, t. ii. p. 3.

1723. all printers and booksellers to print or publish any book without permission of the Keeper of the Seals, and any pamphlets or loose sheets without permission of the judge of police of the district, and the approbation of censors appointed for that purpose.\* Thus did the Regent attempt to stifle that licence of discussion which his conduct had provoked. But as the quantity of water which puts out a small fire only adds fierceness to a large one, so difficulties and prohibitions, which often extinguish a sect, add new vigour to the progress of a nation. The classes which had been enriched under Lewis the Fourteenth now began to exercise their minds, and surveyed their rulers with the eyes of men unenslaved by prejudice, and prepared to value every thing according to its worth.

\* Vie de P. d'Orleans, ii. 341.



ACCOUNT OF SOME OF THE BOOKS  
QUOTED IN THESE VOLUMES.

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*Alberoni. Histoire du Cardinal Alberoni.*

*Istoria del Cardinal' Alberoni, seconda Edizione.*

*Con aggiunta de' manifesti pubblicati da sua  
Eminenza. Amsterdam, 1720.*

The former of these works contains only a part of the life of Alberoni, said to be written by Rousset. The latter is a translation into Italian of Rousset's work, with a continuation of the life to the final retreat of Alberoni; and the valuable addition of four letters, addressed by him to Cardinal Paolucci, from Sestri, in reply to the accusations brought against him.

*Berwick. Mémoires de Berwick, 2 vols. 12mo.*

The greater part of these Memoirs was written by Marshal Berwick himself; they are chiefly military, but contain some valuable political facts.

*Bolingbroke. Letter to Sir W. Wyndham.*

One of the best written works in the English language.

----- *Correspondence, 4 vols. 8vo.*

Very valuable for the history of the Treaty of Utrecht.

*Caylus, Souvenirs de Madame de.*

A very entertaining fragment written by the lively niece of Madame de Maintenon.

*Choisy. Mémoires de.*

Choisy has been justly praised by Anquetil for the manner in which he collected the anecdotes he relates. Voltaire questions his accuracy, but on no solid grounds.

*Dangeau. Extraits du Journal du Marquis de Dangeau.*

There are two works to which this description applies: the one published in two volumes 8vo., by Madame de Genlis, the other in one volume 8vo., by M. Lémontey, accompanied by an excellent essay on the reign of Lewis XIV. The work itself is full of little details of the daily proceedings of the court. It is manifest, that the sole value of a work of this sort consists in the fidelity with which it is reported; yet Madame de Genlis has ventured to corrupt the text in several places. In one instance, where Dangeau says, that the Dauphine ordered back one of her attendants who had fled to a convent for the purpose of becoming a nun, Madame de Genlis adds, "knowing that she took the step from ill humour, and not from a call." In another place she alters the words of Lewis XIV. himself, to make them more edifying.

*D'Orléans. Vie de Philippe D'Orléans, by M. de la Hode.*

A book of some merit.

*D'Orléans. Extraits de la Correspondance allemande de Madame, Mère du Régent.*

This is a book of authority, but frequently very disgusting. Madame writes to her correspondents without reserve or delicacy on all the persons of that profligate age. In this instance likewise, a new edition, published last year, shows that former editors had softened passages which they thought too plain and harsh.

*Dubois. Vie privée du Cardinal Dubois.*

Professes to be written by one of his secretaries who was not sufficiently paid for his services. The spirit of the work is malignantly hostile to Dubois, but reveals little that was not notorious to the whole world.

*Dubois.—Mémoires Secrets du Cardinal Dubois.*

The official papers of the time, published from the collection of M. de Rayneval. The correspondence with Rome relative to the *hat* of Dubois is very curious.

*Duclos. Mémoires Secrets sur les Règnes de Louis XIV. et Louis XV.*

Duclos was historiographer of France towards the end of the reign of Lewis XV. and had access to the best sources of information. He did not publish his work during his life-time, and therefore speaks without fear and without favour. He is somewhat too fond of anecdotes however, and scarcely rejects any which have been current in the best society of his time. He is

therefore a useful and agreeable, but not an infallible guide.

*Gourville. Mémoires de Gourville.*

Contain many curious circumstances, on the authority of a man of sense, who had good means of information.

*Louis XIV. Œuvres de.*

The best edition of this work is in six volumes, 8vo. It consists of several parts. One part, but the least important, was placed in the King's library at Paris by the Maréchal Duc de Noailles, to whom it had been given by Lewis XIV. himself. Another portion was given by Lewis XVI. to General Grimoard, the editor of a part of the work. Another was given by the Abbé Sallier, Librarian of the King's library, to the editor of the Œuvres Mêlées of Pelisson.

With respect to the Memoirs, it seems to be agreed, that they are in the hand-writing of Pelisson, who was employed by the King in 1672, as his historiographer.

In page 15 of the copy deposited by the Duke of Noailles, is the following note, "Le roi a mieux mis cet endroit; je n'ai pu bien retenir les termes précis, et puis avoir oublié d'autres choses ailleurs." It would appear from this note, that Pelisson wrote from the King's dictation, and put this note in the copy delivered to the King for his perusal and approbation. In the other copies it is not found. Another note leads to the same conclusion; the text says, "quelles places j'ai achetées." The note of Pelisson, "Je ne

sais s'il y a plusieurs places achetées." At the end of the *Memoirs* for the year 1661, Pelisson says in a very long note,

"J'ai remis ici le travail d'autrefois, retouché sur ce que j'ai vu depuis. Il seroit bon que S. M. le lût, comme tout le reste, avec le crayon que j'attache, pour marquer ce qui ne lui plaira pas.

"Tout ce qui est ici renfermé avec des crochets ou guillemets, est ce que j'ai cru pouvoir suppléer ou de faits ou de réflexions.\*

"Le reste qui n'est point marqué n'est pas de moi pour la matière, quoique je puisse avoir resserré ou étendu, changé le tour, ou l'expression, suivant la liberté qui m'a été donnée.

"J'ai copié de mot à mot ce qui est des finances.

"Le Roi aura la bonté, s'il lui plaît, de me dire s'il y a trop ou trop peu de réflexions et de conseils pour son dessein : ce que j'ai vu m'a persuadé qu'il en falloit mettre. Des princes qui ont écrit pour leurs enfans, les uns n'ont laissé que des préceptes, sans histoire, ce qui est moins agréable ; les autres que l'histoire sans préceptes, ce qui est moins utile : la perfection est peut-être à joindre les deux. J'ai insisté sur la nécessité de l'application, dont il semble que Monseigneur a plus de besoin ; mais au fond ce n'est qu'une ébauche, qu'on achèvera quand on aura conçu tout-à-fait l'intention de S. M. quoiqu'il n'y ait personne sans exception qui ne doive trembler quand il écrit pour elle."

This passage is very equivocal ; from the beginning it would seem that all was the King's ; and from the end, that the reflections at least were chiefly Pelisson's. It will perhaps be safe to conclude, that the King dictated from notes (of which many are still remaining)

\* Ces passages sont en petit nombre et courts, à l'exception de tout le détail sur l'affaire de Vatterville, et sur la réparation faite au nom du roi d'Espagne.

the history of the year ; that Pelisson wrote from what he had heard, adding many of the reflections, and nearly all the form.

Another point to be considered is, at what time these Memoirs were composed. Now, at the end of the first manuscript, p. 100, of the printed edition, the king observes that many of his ancestors waited till the end of their lives before they gave exhortations of this kind to their children, but that he writes “ lorsque la vigueur de mon age, la liberté de mon esprit, et l'état florissant de mes affaires ne vous permettroient point d'y soupçonner de déguisement ou de les attribuer à la vue du péril.” Speaking of the employment of his time in 1666, he says, “ quand après cela, j'avois quelques momens de reste, je les employois aux Mémoires que vous lisez maintenant.”\* Here then we have the beginning of the Memoirs ; but their completion in their present form seems to have taken place long afterwards ; for in the year 1661, speaking of the belief of his taking a prime minister, he says, “ Le temps a fait voir ce qu'il en falloit croire, et c'est ici la dixième année que je marche.”†

After this decisive passage, it is curious to see the editor wondering why Rhulhieres fixed on the year 1670 as the year of the composition of the Memoirs.

These dates enable us to add to our estimate of the value of the Memoirs. We see that they were not drawn up in haste, and given away without revision. They were the early employment of the King in his

\* Mém. vol. ii. p. 63.

† Vol. i. p. 37.

leisure moments in the year 1666. Pelisson says, in a letter to Lewis XIV. in 1671, that the King had drawn him from a state of misfortune and disgrace nine months before.\* It was soon after this, probably, he was entrusted with the Memoirs. They thus come to us, adorned indeed by the reflections of a stranger, but approved and weighed by Lewis XIV. with the most scrupulous care. It is probable that he left to his grandson and successor more perfect copies, one of which Lewis the XVIth put into the hands of General Grimoard. There are some corrections in the hand of Lewis the XIVth in the last copy, which show that he adopted them. Speaking of the plan of giving the crown of Poland, the MS. says, that what touched him the most was, that it was an opportunity which seldom occurs of making a present of a crown; and Lewis adds, “et de l’assurer à la France.” In the next page are two other corrections in his own hand-writing.†

Upon the whole, then, we may conclude, that although these Memoirs are, as M. Flassan observes, neither in the hand-writing nor in the style of Lewis, they are nevertheless composed from notes of his dictation, and contain sentiments which he either suggested, or was willing to adopt as his own.

*Louville, Mémoires de.*

Louville was employed in Spain more than once; his despatches are extremely curious, and give an interesting view of the state of Spain at that time.

\* Avert. p. 21.

† Mém. t. ii. p. 268-269.



*Maintenon.*

The best edition of the Letters of Madame de Maintenon is in three volumes, small octavo. Here again I have to observe, that former editors had taken the liberty of altering the style of Madame de Maintenon. Really this unfaithfulness is inexcusable.

*Noailles, Mémoires du Maréchal Duc de Noailles.*

These Memoirs are compiled from despatches and other writings of the Duke of Noailles by the Abbé Millot. They contain much authentic information.

*Régence, Mémoires de la.*

This work contains many of the official papers of the period of which it treats. In other respects it is not of the least value.

*St. Simon, Œuvres de.*

No one will deny that it is impossible to write more entertaining works than those of the Duke of St. Simon. Some, however, have questioned their accuracy. In my opinion, St. Simon was too religious and too honest a man to relate that which he knew to be false; what he saw, therefore, he relates faithfully; his hearsay evidence must not be admitted without great caution. The best edition of St. Simon is in 13 volumes, printed in 1791, with the date of Strasburgh. In the late edition, published at Paris, the appendices are omitted.

*Swift.*

The works of Swift, especially the Diary, are of the

greatest possible assistance towards forming an estimate of Queen Anne and her ministry.

Many other works which I have consulted are either so well known, or so little worth knowing, that it were needless to describe them. Among the former I have been exceedingly indebted to the various compilations of Archdeacon Coxe. Among the latter may be reckoned a posthumous work of Marmontel on the Regency, which has little more foundation in truth than many of his *Contes Moraux*.

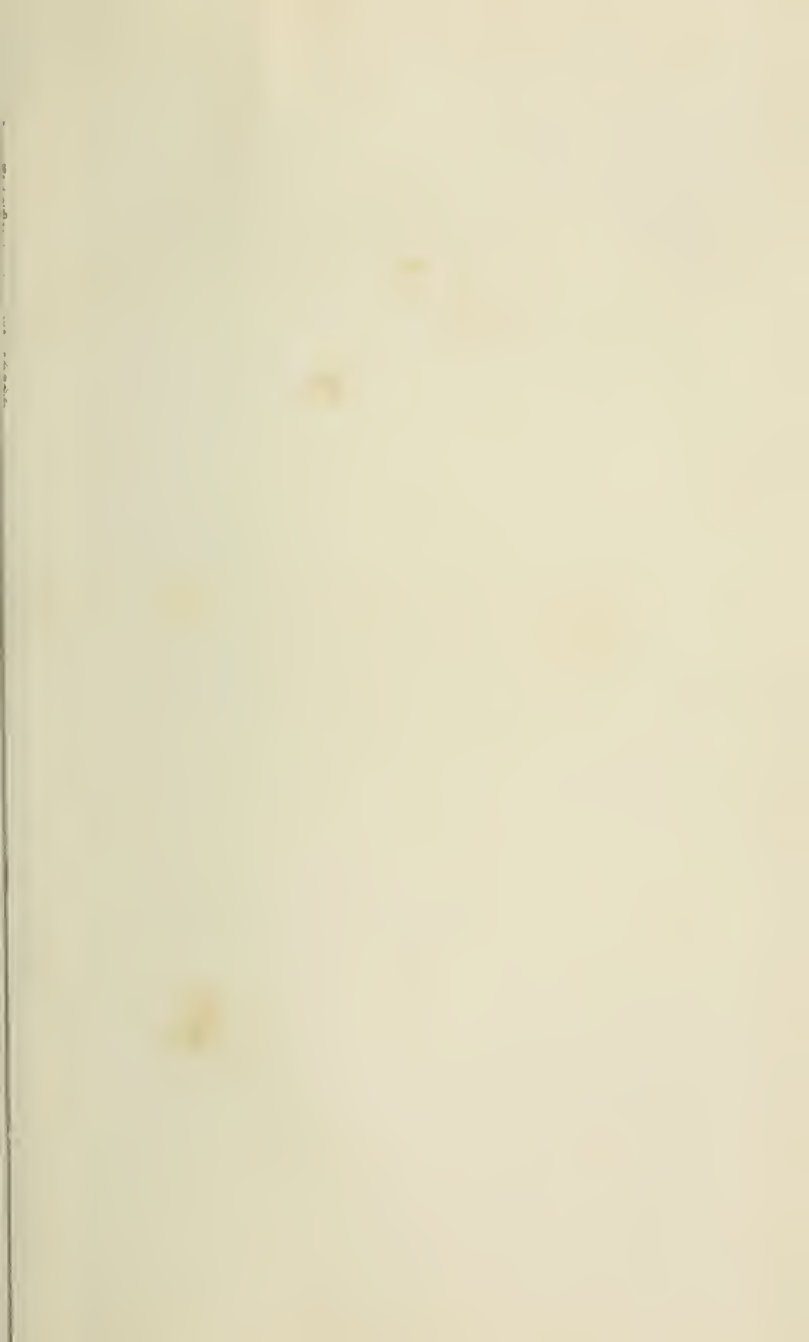
Of Manuscripts I have consulted only one, a narrative of the rebellion in Scotland, in 1715, by one of the principal persons engaged. I am indebted for the perusal of it to the kindness of the Earl of Rosslyn.

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

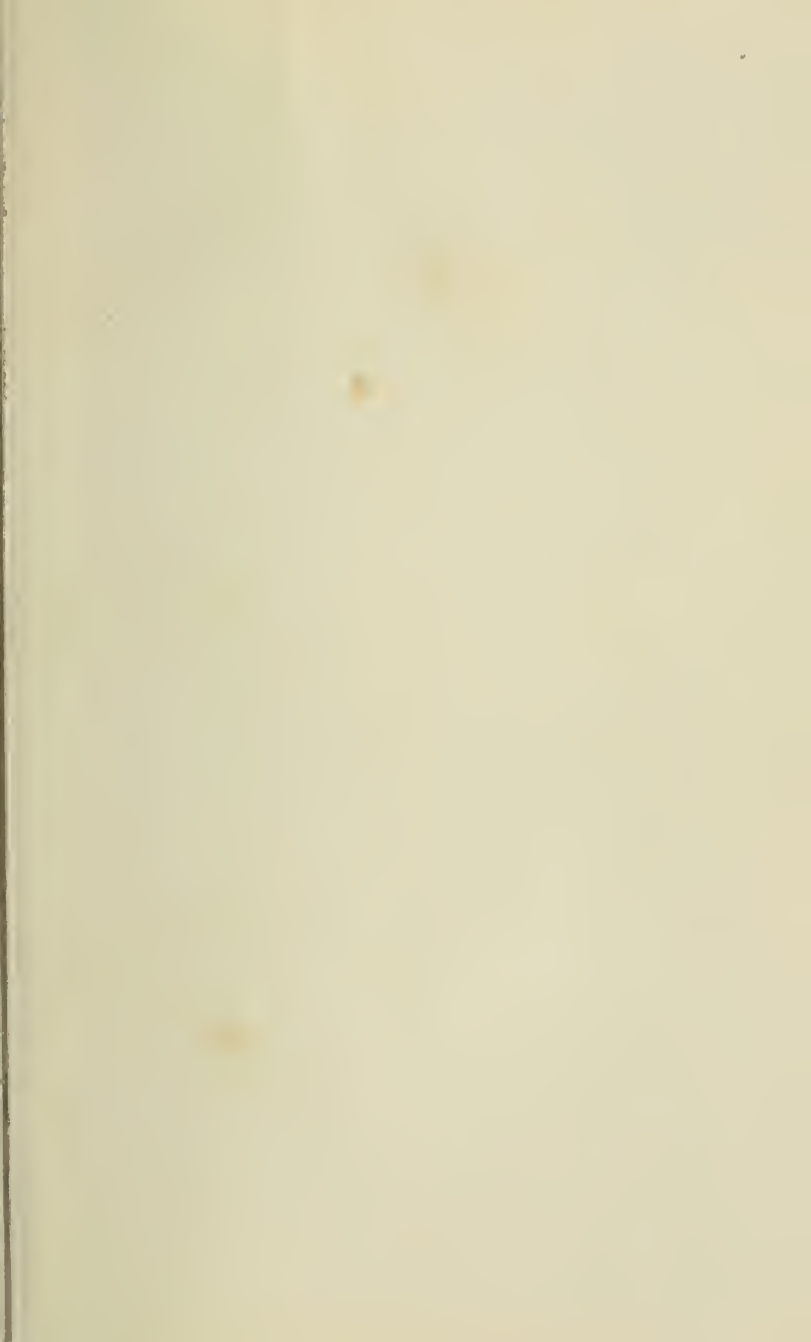
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